



Evaluation of our education at ITC.

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I work as a course director at the ITC faculty of the University of Twente. In my position I'm responsible for the daily running of the MSc specialization Urban Planning and Management. In this specialization we annually have to evaluate and update our education. We do this on the basis of both student and staff input. The documentation of the evaluation and improvement is strictly recorded according to protocol as it is an important input to the accreditation of our education.

Evaluation of education at the University of Twente (UT) is embedded in a quality assurance protocol. The Faculty ITC continuously works on the quality of its education based on the key elements from the general UT quality assurance framework and the external accreditation framework from the Dutch Flemish Accreditation Organization (NVAO). The University of Twente was re-accredited at institute level in June 2014. Because of this, the UT Master programmes can apply for a shorter accreditation at programme level with a limited framework.

This document is adapted from the original quality assurance documentation of ITC.

Functions of internal quality assurance (IQA)

Internal quality assurance (IQA) is focused on continuous improvement of education provided. The main function of internal quality assurance are to contribute to (self-) learning, development and improvement of courses; students' learning and teachers. Secondly we use the evaluation to create a platform for exchange and discussion of experiences. Of course we evaluate in order to have input for internal and external appraisal and accountability.

For quality assurance in education we use the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle. This cycle is adopted by the Faculty ITC to set up the generic framework for process of the internal quality assurance system. The PDCA cycle is an iterative four step management method often used in quality assurance activities.

The four steps of the PDCA cycle include:

- Plan for a high level of education quality
- Do quality assurance activities
- Check what level of quality has been achieved; where improvements are needed
- Act according to the results of quality assurance (and start the cycle anew)

In the overview of the various IQA activities in the Faculty, this PDCA cycle is applied at each of the three levels of the internal quality assurance (IQA) system, i.e. the faculty, the programme and the study unit level.

The frameworks for internal quality assurance

A good IQA system produces data and evidence necessary for the external accreditation of the UT Master programmes and certificate courses offered by the Faculty ITC. It is therefore necessary to adjust the faculty's IQA activities to the accreditation framework of the Dutch Flemish Accreditation Organization (NVAO).

The NVAO has a dual accreditation system aimed at both the institute and programme level. If an institute for higher education is accredited at institute level, showing that the institute is in control of the quality of its education, a shorter accreditation at programme level is allowed (limited framework). The assessment of existing programmes focuses on the quality achieved. The programme must demonstrate that its educational practice meets the standards. The assessment is aimed at:

- i. the intended learning outcomes,
- ii. the teaching and learning environment,
- iii. student assessment,
- iv. the achieved learning outcomes.

The Faculty ITC also uses criteria from the assessment of the distinctive quality feature Internationalisation (from the European Consortium for Accreditation in Higher Education (ECA)). In the applications for continued NVAO accreditation of its regular programmes, the Faculty ITC always aims at the distinctive quality feature Internationalisation.

PDCA at faculty level

At Faculty level the PDCA cycle comes together in the faculty year plan. This plan is established according to the following steps:

“Plan for quality”, which includes review of education vision and quality assurance, selection of staff, staff development plans, checking educational facilities and reviewing the assessment policy. To “do Quality Assurance” we then Generate an overview of the teaching staff population and check whether the teachers and examiners have the right qualifications for the faculty as a whole. We “check the level of quality” by reviewing the results of exams and course evaluations at faculty level. On that basis we “Act for better quality” by writing a faculty year plan that will drive the cycle for the next course year.

PDCA at programme level

At programme level, the PDCA cycle comes together in the annual improvement plan (AIP). This is the main education evaluation document which for instance we produce for each of the specializations in our MSc in Geo-Information Science and Earth Observation. My job is to ensure that all the study unity reports (see next section) are compiled and submitted as the AIP for the Urban Planning and Management specialization. The following aspects are covered in this AIP:

At the beginning of the course year the intended learning outcomes for the programme and its elements are defined. On this basis the curriculum is developed or

refined. One thing to address sharply is how the educational goals link to the research vision and efforts of the different research themes in the faculty. Selection of students is one of my prime tasks. On the basis of their prior education and working experience, I check whether they match with our programme. Before the programme can start we still need to review whether the test plans of the study units are valid and make sure that the Education and Examination Regulations are up to date

Evaluation

The programme evaluations are meant to check whether the intended curriculum matches the actual curriculum implementation and whether the intended learning outcomes have been achieved according to the students. The Programme Manager is responsible for this. At the end of a run of a programme an End of course evaluation, consisting of an online survey and a feedback session (per specialization), is conducted. A report is made of the results of the survey and the different feedback sessions.

Annual improvement plans (AIP's)

AIP's are produced of the various parts within the Master programme. Input is provided from the study unit reports and the Programme Managers. These AIP's are distributed to Programme Director and Programme Committee. The Programme Committee gives advice and feedback on these documents.

At programme level, the Programme Director is responsible to monitor and guarantee the quality of the programme as a whole. The Programme Manager is responsible for the execution of the evaluations. The Programme Committee has a strong advisory role in the quality assurance of the programme. Therefore, the Programme Director, Programme Manager and Programme Committee have access to the evaluation results and the AIP's; to possibly act upon these results and provide feedback to the plans.

The level of quality is checked at programme level. For this the faculty has a Programme Committee, consisting of staff and students and an Examination Board.

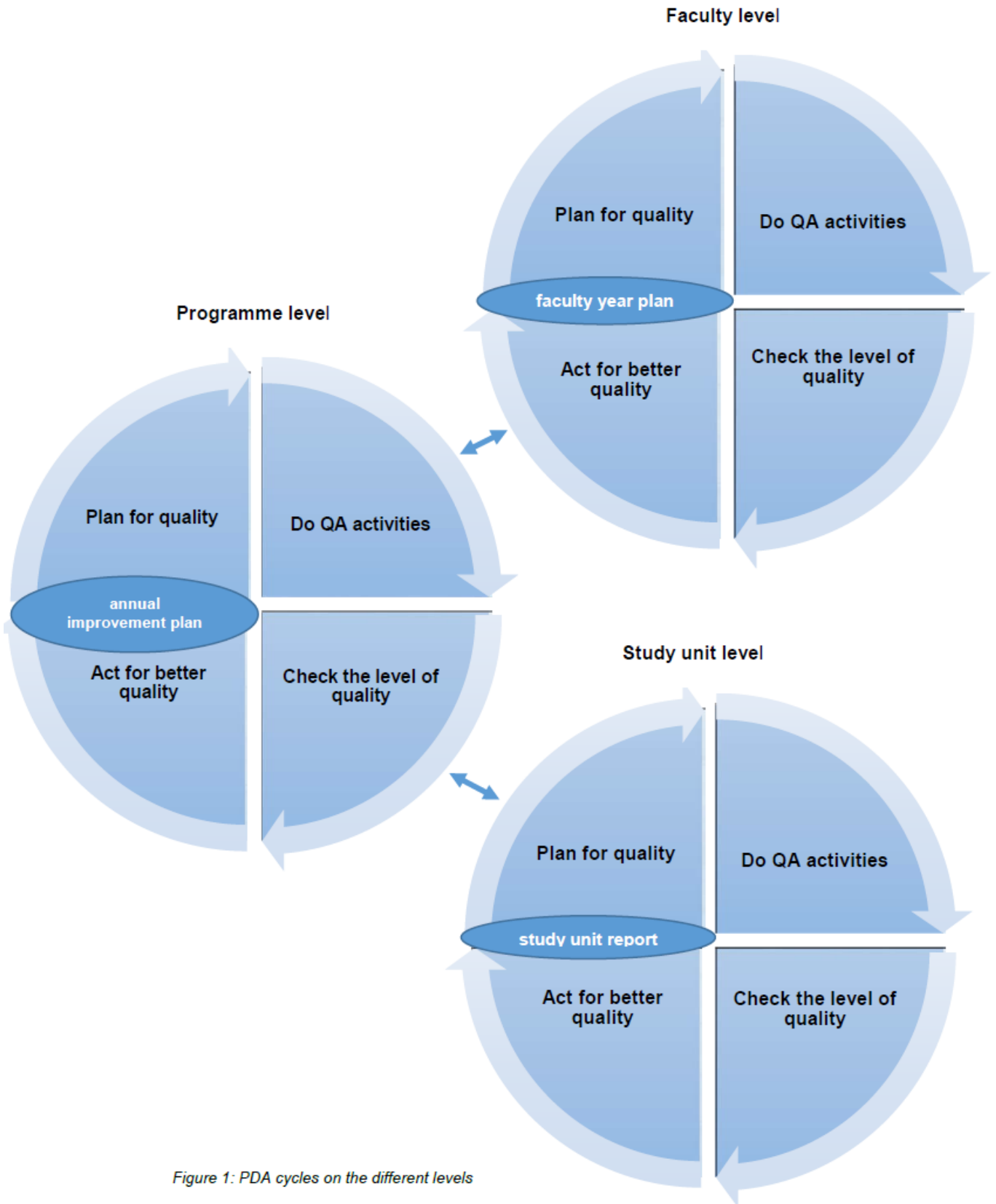


Figure 1: PDA cycles on the different levels

PDCA at study unit level

At the level of individual study units, the PDCA cycle comes together in the study unit report, similar to the programme level AIP.

Unit coordinators develop and organise the study unit; Unit coordinators improve/adjust study units; Educational support staff conduct study unit evaluations. Every study unit of a Faculty ITC programme is evaluated every year. The Programme Manager is responsible to conduct these evaluations. Study unit evaluations have 3 main functions:

- Improvement: Means for improvement of the study unit and the education provided;
- Accountability: Means to provide inputs for the monitoring of the education throughout the programme;
- Student engagement: Involve students in the quality assurance of the courses.

Heads of department conduct teaching staff performance evaluations. A *light* and a *full* evaluation procedure are distinguished for teaching staff performance evaluations. The light procedure is meant for monitoring teaching performance on a regular basis. The full evaluation procedure is meant for cases of bad teaching performance or cases in which the teaching staff member themselves would like to go through the full procedure. The main difference between these two procedures is the number of evaluation activities that have to be conducted and the time that is needed to do this.

Write study unit reports. The Study Unit Coordinator writes the study unit report following a template with attention for the used evaluation methods, strong and weak points of the study unit according to students and staff and planned actions and improvements for next year. The report is sent to the Quality Assurance Officer (for checking/archiving) and to the Programme Manager and the Programme Director (as input for the annual improvement plan).

Reflections: Content delivery, field work and evaluation in 'Inclusive Urban Planning' course

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The Inclusive Urban Planning course was offered as an elective to final year graduate and post – graduate students of CEPT University in a choice based curriculum framework adopted by the University since the last four years. The choice based curriculum adopted by the University since 2013, allows the students to take about 20-25 % of the total credits from courses being offered across any of the 4 faculties in the University. It must be pointed out that since 2013 the University has attempted to constantly evolve and better the course structures, curriculums, content and evaluation frameworks. A participatory and evidence based evaluation of this process is desired and will help the faculty members and other office bearers to learn from the experience of restructuring.

In this particular course, a total of 20 students opted for the course, with most of them belonging to the 'faculty of the planning' with one student each from 'faculty of technology' and 'faculty of architecture'.

Since, the 'right to the city' formed the basis for the course design. One of the primary objectives of the course was to sensitize and make the students reflect around concerns of equity faced by vulnerable sections of society in the Indian and developing country contexts. The idea was also to make the students reflect on professional practices of urban habitat

professionals, whether as architects, planners, technologists or management professionals. Two ways in which this was attempted in the course was by discussing relevant case studies (both field based and policy review oriented); and undertaking guided field based explorations - with faculty members accompanying the students to the field.

Challenges faced: Since, the students in a choice based curriculum also have the leeway to choose a mix of subjects/vertical studios, each student in the class (even though belonging to the same disciplinary background and same year) could have had different course/studio trajectory due to which her/his exposure and thereby the knowledge frame would differ. The course delivery thus in such an open elective course is faced with challenges to meet the multiple demands posed by not just an inter-disciplinary mix, but also the mix of levels and course trajectories.

In such a mix of students, to get students to 'reflect on issues such as equity' demands customization of the course delivery, in order to make the students relate to the course content being delivered. Without such customization, the dangers of the course content becoming irrelevant to certain groups belonging to specific disciplinary niches or a specific trajectory becomes all the more real. This course customization ideally should get reflected in all facets of the delivery of the course; right from assigning readings to choice of field based exercises; and even to application of pre-decided evaluation parameters for grading the students. This also means that as the composition of the class changes, the course delivery would need to keep adapting to this changed composition.

Thus, the key element of success of such customization is dependent on the availability of resources for course tutor to draw on necessary for customization, such as - case study material emerging from different disciplinary perspectives; access to experts belonging to different disciplinary backgrounds; and field based context at different scales for undertaking guided student explorations. Garnering these resources need substantial amount of preparatory time and effort, but also access to financial and other resources- like access to academic and non-

academic networks. Without formal support mechanisms within and outside the University system to pro-actively facilitate engagements to develop and cultivate such networks, it becomes very challenging to develop and deliver such customized course curriculum and content.

Another key element which becomes necessary for such courses is the development of course study material based on inter-disciplinary research particularly in the context of developing countries- where such content is lacking. Such course material can only emerge when researchers belonging to different disciplines in developing country contexts come together and undertake joint research supported by the network proposed above. In a traditional university system such research or knowledge sharing happens through the personal networks of the tutor or through the alumni network. But 'inter-disciplinary research' in architecture/planning schools (where most research is spatially oriented) needs to widen their own relevance and research base by consciously and deliberately building linkages with other research networks embedded in knowledge systems (or universities) undertaking non-spatial research.

In the current course, case studies related to two livelihood groups i.e. 'migrant construction labour' and 'scrap pickers' (developed under the current project) were also used for teaching along with other case materials to sensitize the students to the issues and concerns faced by these groups in the Indian cities and developing country contexts. In the last part of the course, after the discussion of such relevant case materials, the pedagogic practice of case study discussion was followed up- by making students undertake guided field based explorations centered around these same livelihood groups, in order to reinforce the students understanding of the contexts within which such livelihood groups operate in the city.

While undertaking the course and its attendant field work with students, I as an instructor found most of them to be uncomfortable in undertaking field explorations with vulnerable communities whether in slums or other informal communities. Most of them found it easier as an approach to have a cursory

questionnaire survey without taking the time and effort to understand the real causes emerging from social, economic and cultural factors that shape the livelihood and housing concerns of these groups. Thus to make them undertake field based explorations in such settings needed not just guidance - about how to approach and gain entry to the field, but also motivation to undertake such a field based exercise, on the part of the instructor. One of the ways in which this was attempted was by making the students explore the possibility of using new technological tools like digital pens and tabs while undertaking the exercise. Another hurdle for the guided field work was that, since many of them were not acquainted with the scientific use of qualitative tools such as 'interviewing' or 'participatory mapping', these also needed to be demonstrated to them in the initial reconnaissance visits while interacting with NGO personnel and key persons on the field.

As the mix of students were primarily with architectural and engineering backgrounds there also seemed to be an underlying urge on the part of the students to focus on techno-managerial concerns and solutions without enough attempt to explore and understand the causative factors embedded in the socio-economic, political and institutional context, leading to the issues faced by such groups. Such an emphasis needed to be constantly reinforced during the debates/discussions and during field work – by pointing out the constraints of techno-managerial approach disconnected from field realities reflecting the socio-economic and political contexts.

Evaluations in the context of objectives of the course: This also brings up the issue of what gets valued within the value system prevalent in the architecture or planning oriented university. The value system is reflected by what gets evaluated and is given importance both for faculty and student evaluations. I am of the view that architecture and planning education seems to give undue weightage to the output produced like a plan/ drawing or document without giving enough weightage to outcome based evaluations. The course had 2 components of evaluation consisting of a) 2 desk-review assignments expecting them to write reflection paper based on case study

themes discussed in class; and b) field based exploration undertaken under the guidance of the course instructors leading to a group report and presentation of findings/analysis. The evaluation frame thus gave emphasis to evaluate students' learning outcomes in terms of developing a critical approach- based on understanding of the social, economic and institutional factors affecting inclusiveness in cities. The course also tried to create a balance in the evaluation framework by giving weightage to the students approach and performance in the guided field exercise, by evaluating their understanding emerging from such an exercise through a viva-voce of students as a part of their student presentations. Since the faculty members also accompanied the students they were able to get a better perspective to the field conditions and context during the field work undertaken by students, reflected in the evaluations undertaken.

Examination & Evaluation (School of Planning and Architecture, Vijayawada)

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1.1 Evaluation and Assessment

The evaluation of student's performance in a semester is a continuous process. There will be an internal evaluation and/or a semester-end examination to account for the total maximum marks for each subject. In each semester, for every subject, the internal evaluation is done progressively by the subject coordinator(s) with a minimum of two assessments and one mid semester examination. Number, weightages and modes of assessments in internal evaluations are announced at the beginning of the semester as a part of lecture plan/ through a separate notice in consultation with Head and Dean Academic. The results of the periodic internal assessments are to be displayed by the subject coordinator through Head of the Department. Number of subjects, hours of teaching, distribution of credits among different subjects and weightage of marks for internal evaluation and semester end examination, shall be as per the approved

course structure and syllabus of the respective UG programmes, from time to time.

The consolidated marks of all internal assessments, including mid-semester examination of each subject is prepared by the subject coordinator(s) (in the format given by exam section/Department) and made available to students for feedback/comment and discrepancies, if any, as may be pointed out by any student may be rectified by the subject coordinator(s) and thereafter the results are finalized and submitted within the time limit.

Subject coordinator/s certifies the students' eligibility for appearing end-examinations of the semester before submitting consolidated internal assessment marks to the department. The graded scripts of all the internal assignments, supporting files in digital/hard bound to be stored with the subject coordinator(s) for a minimum of one year after the semester end-examinations / such files may be submitted to the centralized storage through HoD. If a subject is handled by visiting faculty, the concerned departments will have all such records under the supervision of concerned Semester Coordinator/Studio Coordinator.

Final Consolidated marks of all the internal assessments for all subjects, including mid-semester examination for each batch of UG Programme is compiled by respective departments and verified by DUGC Convener and submitted to COE through Head and Dean Academic as per the academic calendar.

1.2 End Semester Examinations

Regular and supplementary exams are conducted at the end of each semester, i.e., two times in each Academic Year. The subject coordinator(s) is responsible for setting the question paper, maintaining its secrecy, evaluating and awarding the grades for the subject, unless otherwise nominated. The Chairperson, Senate for few subjects may suggest faculty/experts from outside the institute to set the question papers. The complete transparency shall be maintained in evaluation system.

For a course, where more than one faculty member is involved in teaching one of them shall act as coordinator (as nominated by Head of the Department). Two sets of Question papers along with key for theory exams are prepared for each subject as per the instructions circulated by Controller of Examinations for each examination and submitted to exam section in a sealed cover. One of the question papers is set for regular end examination, while the other set is reserved for the supplementary exams, if required.

Evaluation of the answer scripts is done by the respective subject coordinator(s), unless otherwise nominated. The evaluation is done in a centralized manner where the concerned faculty have to be present and evaluate the answer sheets. No faculty member is allowed to take the answer sheets out of the evaluation hall for marking. Any body found doing so will be viewed seriously and may face disciplinary action.

1.3 Results of Examinations

Final consolidated marks of all the internal assessments and end semester evaluation for all subjects, batch wise will be submitted to COE through Head and Dean Academic by DUGC Convener within five days after the conduction of exam, the results are declared by the Examination Section.

1.4 Award of Grades

"A teacher is the best judge in awarding the grades". However, he/she has to be impartial, logical and maintain complete transparency while awarding grades. The Institute follows absolute grading system.

A student is awarded a letter grade in each course he/she is registered for, indicating his/her overall performance in that course. There are seven letter grades: A, B, C, D, E, E* and F. Grade E* is awarded to students who clear the subject in supplementary examinations.

Evaluation of the BlnUCom courses at KRVI

Ainsley Lewis, Dean B.arch, KRVI

Educating an architect is always a challenge. The formative years offers several possibilities as the learner is like a sponge willing to absorb. It is only at the senior years the learner is mature enough to discern ones interests and the develop the ability to focus on them, thus chartering ones own subject path in a credit based system of the Mumbai University.

The Mumbai University with its revised syllabus offers architectural institutes the opportunity to prepare their own course based on the direction and pedagogical intent of the school. This offers the institutes of higher education the opportunity to create course content that is not only relevant but also address issues that are contemporary. The faculty thus have the opportunity to develop courses based on their research interests.

The BlnUCom program has a mandate that the faculty who undertake research need to use the case study work so as to evolve course material. This program was a challenge for the faculty, as they had to prepare course material, a structural shift in the way courses were imagined by the Mumbai University and its prescribed syllabus. The new knowledge thus produced through their research had very limited reading material for the learner and faculty had to identify sources for appropriate material relevant to their respective courses.

The next issue that needed critical thought was to determine the most effective method to conduct a course. Is it more effective to learn theories about a phenomena or is it more effective to get the feel of the behaviour of the phenomena? The former method is where abstract and symbolic generalisations are used to describe research results and do not convey the feel of the behaviour of the phenomena as in the latter methodology. The latter method stresses on the fact that real life experiences with teacher and student offer practical realities and different variables that affect real-life situations.

In this program faculty stressed on a Case Study based approach and this method offered direct engagement with the site and abstract issues could be understood with clarity.

All the five research papers resulted in respective courses that were conducted in Kamla Raheja Institute for Architecture and Environmental studies under the aegis of BlnUCom. Beside these five courses, two studio courses (one at the undergraduate and the other at masters program) were conducted. All of these courses were an initiation to the BlnUCom program in its first year. Both the studios culminated into an exhibition where the findings of the studios were disseminated. The following academic year all the researchers had prepared course content to conduct courses based on their Case study research work.

Five courses were offered to batch of 80 final year students. Each of them signed up for a specific course resulting a compact class of 16 students. The evaluation of the course was conducted using an anonymous online platform and every student sent in their feedback.

The evaluation was subdivided into three parts
Self-evaluation by the student
Course content evaluation and learning outcomes
Faculty evaluation

This information was collated and then shared with the faculty so that there could be further learnings to improve the course.

Some of the comments that the students made, indicated that they were made aware and learnt about the contemporary discourse in climate change, adaptability and resilience within the course conducted by Mamta Patwardan.

The housing theory course conducted by Hussain Indorewala introduced the students to the various policies implemented over the years that discussed the transformation in the idea of provide housing by the state, the nature of delivery systems and the aspirations

of the end user. The learnings from this course were projected through positions the students took in their Architectural Design housing studio in Dharavi that was simultaneously conducted for the final year undergraduate students.

Abhijit Ekbote's course taught the students to use Geographical information systems so as to arrive at a methodological tool to map, measure and represent the degree of accessibility of the designated open spaces available to the formal and informal settlements, which could be a crucial finding towards quantifying the degree of disparity.

The student feedback about the course conducted by Kimaya Kelsukar indicated that they understood the building behaviour, its impact on the occupants and patterns of adaptation adopted for achieving thermal comfort. They used these insights to design their architectural design dissertation projects.

The course conducted by Shweta titled 'Understanding Informal Settlements' introduced students to the various theoretical discourses and ways of seeing and representing informal settlements. It then engaged with conceptual frames such as community, tenure and livelihood and attempted to evolve appropriate research and documentation methods based on this understanding.

The initial year of incubation of the course and the second year of doing a test run offered sufficient insight into the various aspects in the course that are of interest to the student and the time period they require to assimilate the concepts of the course. These two earlier years offered sufficient time for the faculty to strike the right balance between key concepts, practical realities and the student needs to learn and be aware of the issues on site. The third cycle of running the courses will result in well-structured courses with much better results.



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