



## UNIVERSITY OF PETROLEUM AND ENERGY STUDIES

### 1. Title of the Practice

**Peoples' First Initiatives: People at Core**

### 2. Objectives of the Practice

UPES believes that its people are its most important assets. To nurture, develop and ensure the success of its people, UPES believes in having a well-articulated and meaningful approach and systems, that facilitate smooth working for employees and also help create conducive environment at UPES. Platforms are provided to the employees for hearing their voices, their overall development and contributing to their overall success.

The objective of these initiatives, programmes, policies and platforms is to provide a healthy and productive environment to the people associated with the organization. And, the outcome is a team of well-motivated personals, who put forward their best in their actions and work, which helps the organization to go an extra mile, making it a 'Great Pace to Work'.

### 3. The Context

The context for this initiative is:

- Employees- Faculty and staff are the most important assets in any education institution.
- Retention of employees within the organization.
- Development of high potential leaders.
- Gender equity by increasing women in leadership role.
- To build upon competencies and talent.
- Encouraging and enhancing research capabilities of faculty members.
- Enhancing intellect of faculty members by industrial trainings.
- Exposing the faculty members to latest tools/ pedagogies for teaching and learning.
- Providing a comfortable zone to the women employees to maintain their work-life balance.
- Ensuring transparent communication.
- Physical and mental health of the employees.
- Focus on overall development and grooming of the employees.

These are few key areas, which are important for the development of people by providing them a comfortable zone to work in, along with developing themselves. This creates a sense of ownership in the people associated with, resulting in the overall growth of organization. Based upon the interactions through various platforms, the areas of development have been recognized and accordingly, appropriate programmes have been designed to help the employees to recognize their potential and utilize it fully in a productive manner.

### 4. The Practice



Few of the important initiatives taken by UPES to provide an employee friendly culture are described below:

**Flexible Working Hours:** UPES observes five working days in a week with 8 hours office a day. UPES provides its employees with the flexibility to manage their individual daily work schedules between 8:30am to 10:00am in the morning and between 4:00pm to 7:30pm, based on their work and personal requirements, provided they complete 40 Hours in a week.

**Leave Policy:** Employees are eligible for the following types of leaves as per the leave matrix below:

SNo.	Leave type	Entitlement
1.	Privilege leave (PL)	30 days
2.	Casual leave (CL)	10 days
3.	Sick leave (SL)	Unlimited
4.	Maternity leave	a. Maximum of 26 weeks up to 2 children b. Maximum up to 12 weeks for more than 2 children
5.	Paternity leave	15 days
6.	Adoption leave	90 days

Along with this, employees are also facilitated with study leaves and duty leaves, as and when applicable and required.

**Kilkari: The Creche:** UPES has provided a day care to the employees, where their children can grow in a safe and healthy environment. The crèche is equipped with CCTV cameras with live access to the parents. Other necessary accessories including the care takers are also available in it.

**Navrachna:** Navrachna is a program for the over wellbeing of employees – mental, emotional and physical. 2 initiatives have been launched under this banner: Biggest Loser Wins and Main Hoon Na. Biggest Loser Wins focuses on physical fitness, on the other hand, Main Hoon Na aims at providing personal counselling to the employees to address their emotional and mental stresses.

**Corporate Corpus:** UPES has created a corpus that is intended to monetarily support our employees in case of emergency. The money so paid is not recovered in any form or format from the employee. However, the employee is required to submit documentary evidence for the emergency.

**Loan & Advance Policy:** The Loan and advance policy at UPES is made to provide financial assistance to employees who have immediate need for funds during any exigency. These exigencies could be marriage, child education, death, house accommodation, house renovation or medical emergency.

**Safe environment for Women – Prevention of Sexual Harassment:** As per Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal Act, 2013, Internal Complaint Committee is active at UPES to ensure its compliance and execution to undertake time-bound redressal of complaints received under this policy.

**Fee Concession for wards of Employees:** The fee concession is given for an amount equivalent to 75% of the Semester Fee (inclusive of Tuition and Academics Services Fee) of the programme for the first year.

**People Development Programmes:** UPES has different training programmes for the development and grooming of its employees. Programmes are reflected in the following figure, and each program has a specific group of attendees.



**Intellect Enhancement:** Faculty members are provided an opportunity to learn by industry exposure through a unique program ‘Abhigyat’, wherein they go for an intern in the industry of their area of interest and learn the latest developments in the field. PGCAP is such a professional development program for relatively new faculty members for providing them exposure to the holistic philosophy of teaching, and also about the new tools for enhancing the impact of teaching-learning process.

**Research Enhancement:** Opportunities are available to encourage research orientation in faculty members. SEED funding is made available to the faculty members to shape their research ideas. Workshops are organized for research paper writing, patent filing, research proposal writing and research collaboration for students and faculty members. In order to encourage students to become

innovators and entrepreneur UPES provides student support under SODH. A Central Instrumentation Centre (CIC) is existing with state-of art equipment to facilitate research activities.

## 5. Evidence of Success

UPES is the first Indian University to be certified as ‘**Great Place to Work**’. The success of every initiatives and training program is widely observed in the change in the behaviour, attitude and performance of people, which helps everyone to grow together. The policies and initiatives have provided a very comfortable environment to the employees with a family-like feeling and belongingness to them. They have been moulded towards positive leadership with a changeover in their thoughts and beliefs. As an outcome of development trainings, number of women in leadership has increased, people have been promoted to various portfolios they aspired to and they deserved to.

Few of the acknowledgements of employees can be revisited as under, appreciating and thanking the organization for the support received by them in need:

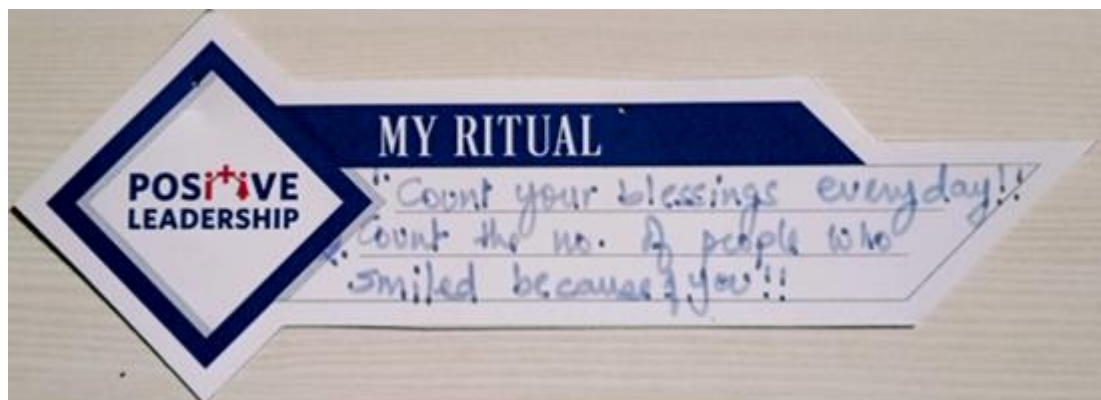
### *Testimonials*

*“My mother had a relapse of ovarian cancer and she was asked to go through a surgery. I reached out to HR for help under this policy and was loaned out this money in less than an hour. I felt so blessed at that time as my husband was not around and I just did not know how to arrange this amount. Thank you UPES. The help then meant so much to me and my family and my mother always sends her blessings to UPES”*

*- An employee at UPES*

*“ I needed to send some money to my family in Kerala as we had lost a significant amount of our furniture and our house. I requested for loan and was given the same. I was very new and had just joined UPES. Was not sure, if this loan would be given. But an exception was made, and I was able to help my family. I was asked to take leave and be with my family too. My colleagues and boss came forward to help me in this tough time. Can't thank UPES enough”*

*- An employee at UPES*





## Female fraternity at UPES encouraged towards Leadership Roles

DEHRADUN, SEPT 28 (IANS) — Her teaching several initiatives in the recent past to minimize and realize the true potential of its existing employees the HR department at UPES under the leadership of the Director, Monika Jain launched yet another initiative called "Shakti" focused at fostering and nurturing women working in UPES towards Leadership roles. This initiative has been launched to enable, empower and equip the volunteering women employees working in the University.

Sharing gender diversity of the organization Anand, Senior Director-Public Affairs informed that female employees constitute a little over 25% of the total employees but only 2% out of them are in leadership roles currently. This endeavor has been undertaken to tap into this sizeable quantity of available and talented human resource he said. Speaking at the launch of "Shakti", Manish Mehta, President of the University said that he



firmly believes that "Women are the real architects of our society" and need concerted and focused encouragement to realize their untapped potential. Dr Deependra Jha, Vice-Chancellor giving an overview of this initiative shared that this would be a three-month training based on a 3-E module, which would include "Environment" having Supportive, unbiased and inspiring as the key elements.

The second being "Enabling" with potential, aspirations and involvement in decision making as the fi-

cus area. The third E he said would be "Empower" which would focus on thoughts, beliefs, actions and choices, he said. Sharing details of this initiative Monika Jain disclosed that this would be three months long training with intermittent interventions by professional trainers during which the shortlisted women volunteers would begin on this journey by first evaluating themselves on a globally established matrix which would include identification of existing limitations followed by learning prac-

tices required to improve upon them. Some of the topics which these volunteers will get exposed to would include "Friends & Enemies of Growth", "Understanding High Performance Teams", "Seed of Women Leaders", "Comprehending the Bigger Picture", "Non Violent Communication", "Situational Leadership", "Executive Presence" and "Building your own Brand". The current batch shortlisted for "Shakti" comprises of 30 motivated young women from teaching and non-teaching departments in UPES.



*It was a brilliant exposure and beautifully designed course. I want that every woman should get a chance to such an exposure and should know how to bring their true self out. "SHAKTI" boosted my confidence and self-awareness. A Big thanks to the team of SHAKTI organizers.*

*-Faculty at School of Business and a delegate*

## **6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required**

Resources required to implement this practice are as follows:

1. Resource persons as trainers for various development programmes.
2. Industrial collaborations for exposure to faculty members.
3. Proper set-up and support staff for the crèche.
4. Adequate instruments and equipment in the laboratories to support research activities.
5. A conducive environment for culture change.
6. Separate funds for accelerating the initiatives.

Important challenges faced while planning and executing the practice include:

1. An open mind and willingness to change and learn.
2. Receiving grants for research and lab establishment.
3. Sustaining the satisfying services for the crèche as a facility.
4. Getting good people as trainers.
5. Time management for faculty members for trainings while associated with other academic responsibilities.
6. Financial resources as a private institution.
7. Providing sufficient platforms to the people who have been developed through these programmes.

Maintaining a healthy and positive surrounding and atmosphere for the people who have not been selected for these programmes.

## **I. Practice-2**

### **1. Title of the Practice**

Digital Teaching and Learning: HBO (Hybrid, Blended and Online) Education and the Millennial Students

### **2. Objectives of the Practice**

There is an increasing recognition that hybrid, blended, and online (HBO) access of various subjects for the students is an important part of modern educational requirements. In the university of the future, most courses will be hybrid or online and delivered to optimize the learning experience. The key objective is providing students 24-hour, 7-days-a-week access, so they may learn whenever, wherever, and in the manner they deem best.

UPES believes in offering a unique, state-of-the-art, cutting-edge digital student experience that ensures the best learning outcomes for the students. This distinct digital experience, focused on student engagement and success, drives meaningful employability outcomes to support student achievement and career advancement.

### **3. The Context**

The millennial student's learning needs are very different. To cater to these needs, it was necessary to self-disrupt traditional ways of teaching and learning and to introduce more hybrid and blended pedagogical elements into academic design and delivery. The fundamental challenge was change management: teachers who, in some cases, had never been exposed to these methods, had to learn them and integrate them with their own teaching methodologies.

At the same time, making the entire exercise self-sustaining was key, and to do this, a conscious cultural shift was introduced. Faculty were enabled to create engaging content in a gamified environment using digital credentials. Their lectures were recorded and made available to students 24 hours a day, 7 days a week on any device. Online features like “Ask the Instructor” and “Class Café” were introduced; specialized courses on effective learning-management-system use, for both faculty and students, were developed, and all student communications were sent electronically.

#### **4. The Practice**

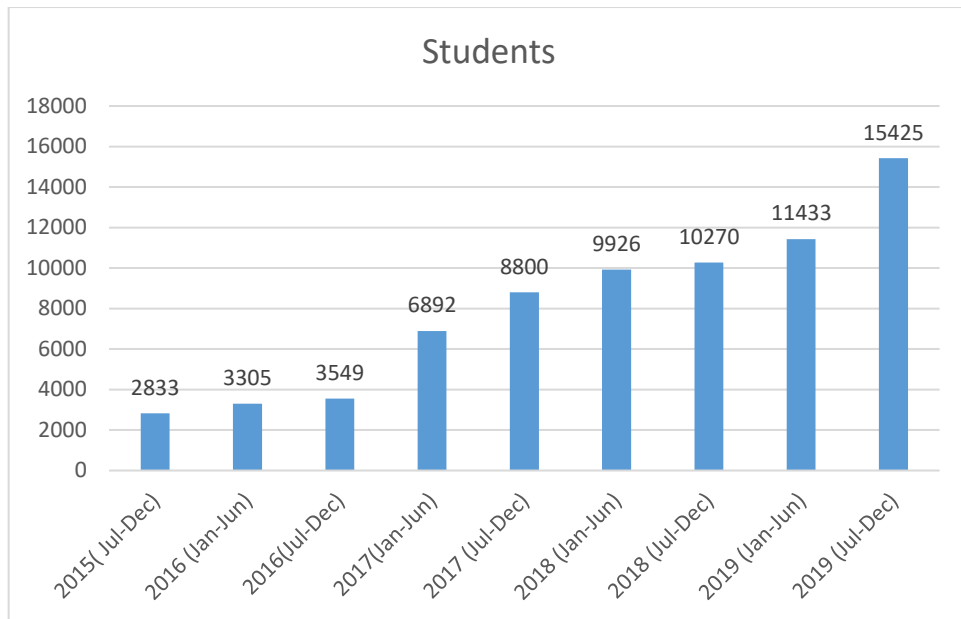
To serve as the backbone for the entire initiative, a state-of-the-art, mobile-enabled digital learning and collaboration platform was conceived and implemented and replaced the university’s legacy systems. Recognizing the relevance of video for today’s educational needs, complementary, integrated platforms for video lecture-capture, simulcast, auto-content-indexing, and video analytics were introduced.

Several computing labs that used to be traditionally held in physical spaces were virtualized on the cloud—giving students access on their own device 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Interactive digital textbooks containing embedded animation, built-in interactive simulators, and auto-generated and auto-graded learning questions were introduced to students. Innovative faculty members were identified as champions and were introduced to the nuances of online and blended delivery. These early adopters were trained in detail in a formal certification process. Once certified, they became champions in their own departments and encouraged other faculty members to start imbibing this methodology into their instructional delivery. These faculty members were supported by the university and put through the same training as champions on a sustained basis. Simultaneously, they were also trained in tools for content creation, like Articulate Storyline, Raptivity, etc., and were encouraged to experiment with these tools in creating rich, engaging content. Created content was then put into the learning management system as part of e-supported, blended, or hybrid courses. Faculty one-on-one sessions, where faculty could come and clarify their doubts/get hands on training on specific tools, were also held on a regular basis. This built the momentum for spreading the initiative across colleges within the university.

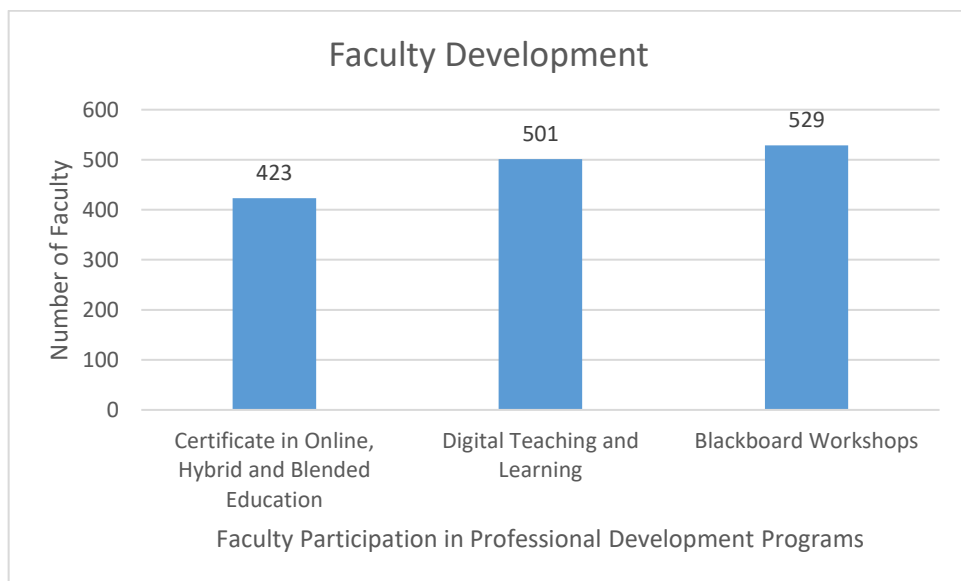
Constraints and limitations encountered included cost—a judicious balance of price and performance was worked out to make the whole initiative sustainable while providing a great student experience. Everything could not be outsourced or bought, and considerations like IP, appropriateness for use, etc., all had to be kept in mind. Another limitation is that while each platform provided its own analytics, to get a complete view of how a student is doing, ideally an integrated business intelligence (BI) was required that could pull data from multiple sources and present it in a single place. This is currently under implementation.

#### **5. Evidence of Success**

Self-disrupting traditional higher education by integrating contemporary digital solutions into the teaching and learning process is evident from statistics (Figures 1-4) on adoption and propagation of HBO across the university’s schools.

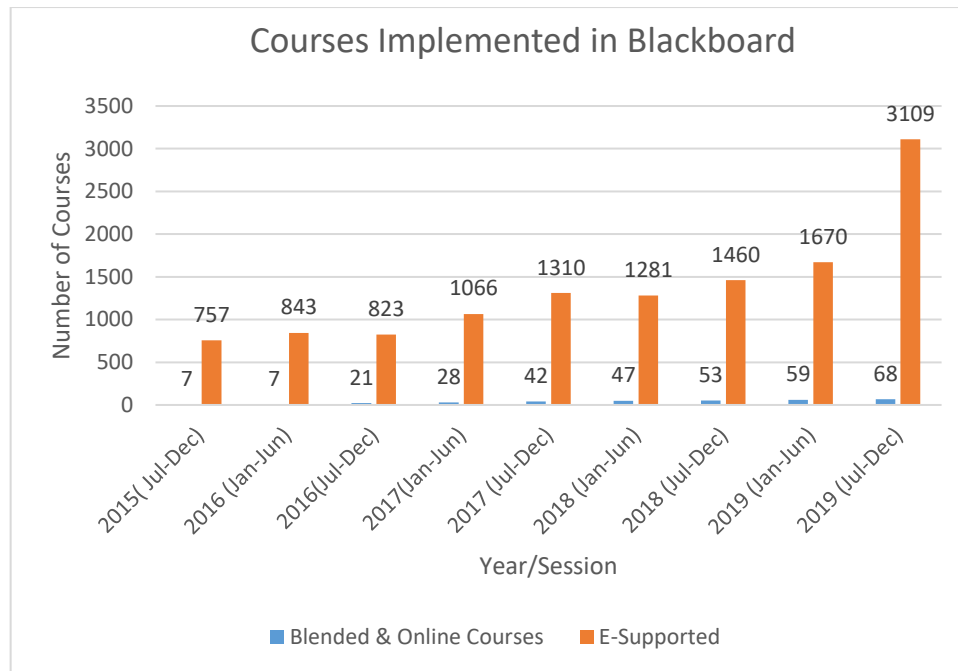


**Figure 1. Student enrolments in the Blackboard learning management system from 2015-2019**

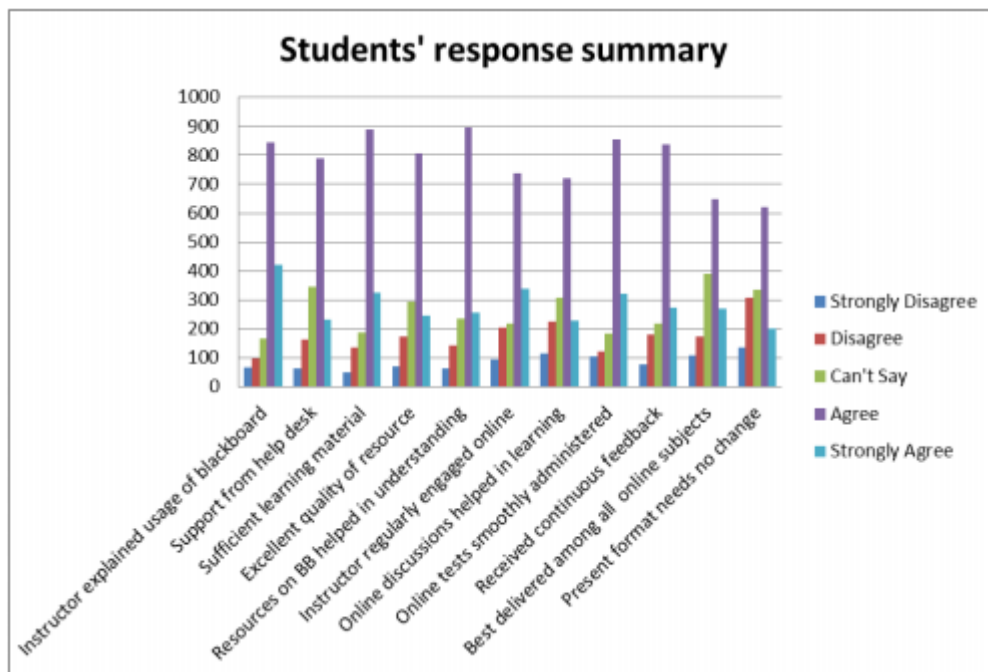


**Figure 2. Number of faculty trained to incorporate hybrid, blended, and online resources**





**Figure 3. Number of courses implemented in the Blackboard learning management system from 2015-2019**



**Figure 4. Students' response to UPES' hybrid, online, and blended learning practices**

Other, equally important outcomes include the following:

- Providing students with employable digital skills in preparation for entering the global workforce.
- Effectively serving increased student enrolments.
- Supporting the university's internationality strategy.
- Efficiently managing capitalized infrastructure investments, reducing expenses, and achieving excellence at scale.
- Enabling the university's commitment to provide a high-quality, differentiated experience for students.

- Ensuring a seamless classroom-to-mobile experience to support 24-hour, 7-days-a-week, on-demand learning.

## **6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required**

Resources required to implement this practice were as follows:

7. An open mind and willingness to change
8. Requisite software and platforms (including open source)
9. Adequate training and enabling of internal faculty
10. A conducive environment for culture change
11. Appropriate instructional design and content (media) resources
12. Appropriate endpoint devices with adequate bandwidth/connectivity

While most challenges pertaining to organizational change have been outlined in the context (3) response above, there were a few technical problems that had to be overcome as well. These included the following:

1. Bandwidth provisioning and traffic shaping (load balancing and prioritization).
2. Integration between different systems. To solve this, it is important to choose systems that are based on open standards and are easily integrable through published APIs and open standards like LTI.
3. Appropriate monitoring of usage and use of analytics to support and enhance learning outcomes. Academics' participation is integral and essential for this.