

SUBJECT REVIEW REPORT

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE



**FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT
UNIVERSITY OF JAFFNA**

9th to 11th June 2009

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of education within a specific subject or discipline. This review evaluates the quality of education within the specific disciplines of Accounting and Marketing being offered by the Department of Commerce (DC), Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce (FMSC), University of Jaffna (UJ), Sri Lanka. The review focused on the Self Evaluation Report (SER) prepared by the Department of Commerce, FMSC, UJ. Based on the SER, the team evaluated the quality of the Bachelor of Commerce (B.Com.) specialization in Accounting and B.Com. specialization in Marketing degree programmes using the criteria set out by the Quality Assurance Council (QAC) of the Ministry of Higher Education.

The self-evaluation report consisted of seven sections, i.e., Introduction; Students, staff and facilities; Curriculum design, content and structure of the programme; Teaching, learning and assessment methods; Evaluation; Postgraduate studies; Conclusion. The quality of education within the disciplines was evaluated in the light of the aims and learning outcomes given in the SER submitted by the Department.

The review focused on the following eight aspects of education:

- Curriculum design, content and review
- Teaching, learning and assessment methods
- Quality of students including student progress and achievement
- Extent and use of student feedback, qualitative and quantitative
- Postgraduate studies
- Peer observation
- Skills development
- Academic guidance and counselling

The evaluation of the above eight aspects of the program were done by obtaining the information from the following sources:

- The self-evaluation report submitted by the Department
- Meeting with the Acting Vice chancellor, Dean/FMSC, Head/DC, Academic members of the DC, Non-academic staff members of the DC, Librarian, Senior student councillor, Students councillors, Academic councillors of the DC, Marshal, Welfare officer, Director/ Department of Physical Education, Director/Career Guidance and Undergraduate & post-graduate students
- Observation of teaching, student presentations and practical sessions
- Observation of relevant documents (handbooks, department publications, study guides, handouts, question papers, marking schemes, marks sheets, dissertations, evaluation sheets, minutes of various meetings, etc.)
- Observation of Department and other facilities (computer centre, lecture rooms, library, canteen, medical centre, Department of Physical Education etc.)

Each subject review aspect of education was judged by making one of the three standards/levels namely; good, satisfactory and unsatisfactory. For the purpose, strengths, good practices and weaknesses in relation to the each aspect were considered. An overall judgment was made from the three options, i.e., confidence, limited confidence and no confidence by taking into account the status of the judgments given for all the eight aspects of the academic programme.

2. BRIEF HISTORY OF THE UNIVERSITY AND THE DEPARTMENT

University of Jaffna was established in 1974 with two Faculties: Humanities and Science. Now it has eight Faculties and seven Academic Units. The Faculty of Medicine was established in 1978, Faculty of Agriculture in 1990, Faculty of Management Studies & Commerce and Graduate Studies in 1999. Vavuniya Campus was established in 1993 with two Faculties as Business Studies & Applied Science. Seven Academic Units are as follows: Department of Siddha Medicine, External Unit (Distance Learning Unit), Extra Mural Studies Unit, Centre for Fisheries Development, Sports Science Unit, Health Studies Unit, Workers Education (Human Recourse Advancement Unit). The University of Jaffna functions with its vision being,

“To be the leading centre of excellence in teaching, learning, research and scholarship”

The faculty of Management Studies & Commerce of the University of Jaffna was established in 29th May 1999 as one of the Management Faculties in Sri Lanka to conduct B.Com. degree program in two specialization areas as Accounting and Marketing and Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) degree program in two specialization areas as Financial Management and Human Resource Management. The B.Com. degree programme commenced in 1977 under the Department of Economics in the Faculty of Arts. The Department of Commerce was approved by the University Grants Commission on 31st July 1982. The Department of Commerce & Management Studies was established on 1st January 1986 and it was separated into two departments as Department of Commerce and Department of Management Studies on 01st September 1994. At present Department of Commerce and Department of Management Studies are functioning under the Faculty of Management Studies & Commerce.

Vision Statement of the Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce:

“To provide best possible human resources to society in the field of Management and Commerce”

Mission Statement of the Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce:

“Our graduates will be amongst those who exercise effective leadership in tomorrow’s business world due to their ability to sense possibilities .to think along different perspectives and the smart way of doing things with a sense of responsibility and innovation create strategic thinking in the market place”

The faculty has got the permission for restructuring and curriculum reforms from the UGC in November, 2008. Under this restructuring faculty is going to have single degree program for Management (BBA) and step down the B.com. degree. The permission has been given to bifurcate the two Departments into four Departments such as, Department of Accounting, Department of Marketing, Department of Financial Management and Department of Human Resource Management. These four departments will be the service departments and the faculty shall award the four Bachelor of Business Administration special degrees: Accounting, Marketing, Financial Management and Human Resource Management.

ee Programme was commenced in 1976 under the Faculty of Arts. In 1980 the Department of Economics was bifurcated into two departments viz Department of Economics and Department of Commerce on 18th December 1983. Department of commerce was revitalized as the Department of Commerce and Management Studies on 1st January 1986. Later, this was bifurcated into two departments viz Department of Commerce and Department of Management studies in September 1994. Finally, the Faculty of Management studies and Commerce was established in 1999 and has evolved into a supreme unit of the University subsequent to a series of developments in the academic as well as administrative aspects. In addition the department provides postgraduate supervision to a limited number of M. Phil students who are registered with the Faculty of Postgraduate Studies.

Mission Statement of the Department of Commerce:

“Supporting Knowledge seeking community by encouraging, teaching and knowledge sharing, to become effective leaders in modern commercial world, with improved effective thinking on different perspectives in future “

3. AIMS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

3.1. Aims

The vision of the University of Jaffna is to be a leading centre of excellence in teaching, learning, research and scholarship. With this vision, the main objective of the DC is to produce graduates with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to overcome the challenges faced by the modern business organisations in this every changing competitive environment. Therefore, the DC aims to provide the students with

- An in-depth knowledge on accounting and principles and practice of management, and their impact in the organisations.
- An exposure to the current requirements of the employment market.
- An opportunity to expose them into research projects to develop research skills in their chosen field of specialisation and promoting their critical thinking to develop innovations which will immensely contribute to foster economic development.
- The enthusiasm and skills towards continuous learning process and to facilitate the achievement of the above aims of the department;
- Maintaining an informal supportive and responsive atmosphere in order to promote the enthusiastic learning towards high completion rates.

Also the department intends to support the teaching staff to widen their knowledge and strengthen their skills which ultimately leading towards their career development. Also it has an aim to improve the quality in these aspects to achieve the aims and objectives.

In brief, the effective teaching and learning process provided by the department will definitely lead to quality enhancement of undergraduates and finally produce highly competent graduates.

3.2 Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of a four-year degree programme, the students are expected to have:

and concepts in the various areas of management and

concepts can be applied efficiently and effectively in organisations for the improvement of productivity, profitability and sustainability.

- Get complete knowledge of organisational environments and practical knowledge of at least one area of organisational administration.
- Realise the importance of the managerial activities in achieving the goals of the organisation and in the usage of limited resources.
- Acquire knowledge in the areas which concern with the day to day operations of the organisations such as law, IT, taxation, auditing etc.
- Improve their capability in handling human and financial resources in organisations.

Programme Details

The DC offers a four year special degree leading to Bachelor of Commerce under the course units system, semester system and GPA system. The Students are allowed to do specialization in Accounting and Marketing from their third year and the selection of the specialization is entirely based on individual preference. The first year academic programme is conducted in both Tamil and English. Second, third and fourth year programmes are conducted in English Medium only. The degree programmes consist of 8 semesters and examinations conduct at end of each semester. Types of course units are main/core subjects, electives, inter faculty courses (optional units) co-modules and non credit courses. A student in the first year of study is required to follow six taught courses amounting to 16 credits in the first semester and six taught courses in the second semester to earn 15 credits. There from the second year on wards in each semester a student is required to follow five taught courses amounting to 15 credits comprising four core courses and one elective course per semester. Thus in the entire programme of the four academic year a student follow courses amounts to 121 credits. This is excluding the ESL, which is a non ó credit course.

A student who fulfilled the following requirements is deemed to have satisfied the condition for the award of the Bachelor of Commerce specialization in Accounting or the Bachelor of Commerce specialization in Marketing degree.

- Completed 121 credits
- Obtained overall GPA of not less than 2.00.

Whenever a student is unable to fulfil the requirements to obtain a four year (special) degree in Bachelor of Commerce, he/she may be awarded a Certificate (completed 31 credits) / Diploma (completed 61 credits) / Three year (General) degree in Bachelor of Commerce (completed 91 credits).

Studentsøenrolment in the current academic year (2007/2008) in the DC is given below:

Year	Male		Female		Total
	Marketing	Accounting	Marketing	Accounting	
First in Commerce	11		18		29
Second in Commerce	11		08		19
Third in Commerce	04	09	02	03	18
Fourth in Commerce	06	05	03	12	26
Total					92

Originally, since 1976, there had been the Department of Economics. Since 1980 this department has been converted to the Department of Economics and Commerce and in 1983 a separate Commerce Department has been established and these had been functioning under the Faculty of Arts. In 1999 the Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce had been established and the Department of Commerce is presently one of the departments in this faculty and the other is the Department of Management Studies. The Department of Commerce offers two four year degree programs, namely: Bachelor of Commerce (Specialization in Accounting) (B.Com, Accounting) and Bachelor of Commerce (Specialization in Marketing)(B.Com., Marketing)

Existing curriculum is a four year (08 semesters) academic programme having 66 courses (47 compulsory, 13 elective and 06 optional.). Please see Table I.

Table I Number of Courses Offered by the Department During Four Years

Level	Number of Courses/ Credits Assigned					
	Main/Core Subjects		Electives		Optional (Inter Faculty Course Unit)	
	No. of Course Unit	Credits	No. of Course Unit	Credits	No. of Course Unit	Credits
Year I						
Semester - I	06	16	-	-	-	-
Semester - II	07	15	-	-	-	-
Year II						
Semester - I	06	15	-	-	01	02
Semester - II	06	15	-	-	01	02
Year III						
Semester - I	07	18	03 (01)	09 (03)	01	02
Semester - II	07	18	03 (01)	09 (03)	01	02
Year IV						
Semester - I	06	18	03 (01)	09 (03)	-	-
Semester - II	06	18	03 (01)	09 (03)	-	-
Total	51	133	12 (04)	36 (12)	04	08

* Business English has not been assigned credits

An undergraduate to earn the degree either in Accounting or Marketing (specialization) has to follow 55 courses earning 145 credits during the four years. Com ENG 1125 English Language is assigned 02 credits in the 1st semester of the first year. In all other 05 semesters in the next 03 years Business English is a compulsory course for the undergraduates with Zero credits assigned for the same. (Along with the re- structuring of the present program, which will be effective from the academic year 2008/2009, the number of credits to be earned for the fulfilment of the degree will be brought down to 120.)

The curriculum designed for the two semester in year I, consists of basic courses addressing the national and disciplinary interests .i.e. ComISH 1126 Introduction to Social Harmony and

Basic Science for Non-Science Students, ComSS 1226
Environment, Com 1132 Financial Accounting I Com
ITCB 1224 Computer Literacy and Basic Application.

However, few courses like Com 1134 Principles & Practice of Banking, Com 1132 Financial Accounting I, Com. 1233 Financial Accounting II, Com 1232 Accounting Theory, Com 1133 Economics for Enterprises seem need re-arranged given emphasis to the levels at which these courses should be introduced, contents to be included and the sequence of teaching in order to minimize repetition and overlapping. A student, with commerce background, joining a university as an undergraduate after successfully completing the Advanced Level examination conducted by the Department of Examinations in Sri Lanka has studied both Macro & Micro Economics and Accounting for well over 600 hours during a period of two years. Introducing basic theory courses, under these subjects at the university level for these students, will be a waste of resources on one hand and on the other, students will show least interest towards these courses encouraging them to keep away from these lectures.

When considering the courses included for the two semesters in the second year, seem both rational as well as irrational. Examples for the rational inclusions are COM 2133, Business Mathematics and Statistics (seems more appropriate in the 1st year 2nd semester) Com.2234 Marketing Management, Com. 2235 Management Science. The irrational inclusions seem Com.2231 Advanced Management Accounting. Com.2232 Advanced Financial Accounting Com 2233. Economic Analysis for Business.

In the 3rd and the 4th year as well, the curriculum structure seems vague. Com 3131 Applied Economics is included in early levels. (This can be introduced in the first two years and Com. 2233 Economic Analysis for Business can be introduced in a later stage i.e.3rd or 4th year) Com 3132 Human Resource Management is a course of general understanding for all management based undergraduates and it can be taught in the 2nd year before the undergraduates go for their specialization. Com 2235 Marketing management as well is a course of that nature and it is correctly included in the 2nd year. Also 2132 Organizational Behaviour is a course to be taught after teaching Human Resource Management.

Appropriate steps have been taken to teach English in almost all the semesters. Except for ComENG 1125 and English Language and Com.3236 English for Professional Communication, not stating the duration either in terms of hours or credits could lead for the discouragement of the teachers as well as students. This situation makes room for the teachers as well as the students to give less priority for these courses and thus it nullifies the very purpose of including these courses in the curriculum structure.

The total curriculum consists (except in the 1st year) of elective and optional courses (**Detail of the courses offered in each semester, Self Evaluation Report, Revised) (SER(R)),pp 7-9.**) Directions given seem inadequate to select optional and elective courses. Stating: "optional ó Inter Faculty Course Unit" alone will make little sense to any reader. The terms "course units" and "co- modules" are also stated with no relevance. **eg. Types of courses p 13, 1.1 structure of the degree program, p.14, (Orientation program 2007/2008.)**

The curriculum has been revised a number of times, i.e. 1992/1993, 1997/1998, 1999, and in 2003/2004.. Another revision is expected to be implemented from the academic year 2008/2009.

The Department is also planning to introduce an online degree in Bachelor of Business Administration in the near future. Initially three centres will be established in Jaffna, Olluvil and in the southern part of the country (Location yet to be decided) for the convenience of the undergraduates who follow this mode of learning.

In addition the department runs an external degree program as well. A revision of the syllabi of the external degree program had taken place recently.

graduates to leave the degree program at levels designated for the undergraduates. However, the undergraduates level before 4th year (i.e. End of first year, Certificate Level, end of 2nd year Diploma Level, end of 3rd year Degree Level) seem a half baked, half processed, un finished product with little inputs gone into and which can be used for nothing. This flexibility of leaving the degree program can be made meaningful and effective by introducing few finishing courses at each level of exit before 4th year.

In case the undergraduate feels he should again continue from the level he departed from the program, can do so by adhering to the rules and regulations stipulated for such events after surrendering the certificate he has already obtained from the University. Inter faculty collaboration and interfaculty activities are at an acceptable level.

The review team is of the view that the aspect of Curriculum Design, Content and Review would be judged as "SATISFACTORY".

4.2. Teaching, Learning and Assessment Methods.

The review team had the opportunity of observing few sessions of class room teaching. The teaching methods used seem primitive. The teaching was basically one way, teacher centred. Team teaching, case studies, role plays, and skill builders were hardly used. There was hardly any teaching plan for any of the course conducted during this semester. The undergraduates were provided with hand outs before the lesson commenced, but they were with minimum standard. The objectives of the lessons, learning outcomes, list of references were hardly found. There was hardly any course manual for any course. The teaching, learning and assessment methods adopted by the department seem substandard. Undergraduates seem enthusiastic and they are happy as the numbers are small in their batches. They seem worried as their name of the degree (B.Com) is comparatively old.

There were few presentations done by the students but they seem below standard. Assessment methods are based both on continuous (25% marks) and end semester examinations (75% marks). It was revealed that though 25% marks are allocated for Continuous Assessment 15% were again allocated for a test based examination (i.e. Mid Semester test) and the other 10% was allocated for two classroom/take home assignments. It was said that, four assignments per course are given and for the final assessment, marks earned for the best three were considered. Documentary evidence to this effect was not available. May be that, this has started recently. This proved practically that almost all the 100% marks are allocated only on the written aspect of testing. These primitive assessment methods hinder opportunities for creativity. On the other hand, the marks earned below "C+" for any course at the end semester examination can be upgraded up to a "B+" at the immediate attempt and the new grading is considered for final assessment there after. This seems advantageous from the point of view of the undergraduates.

There were records maintained by the department in relation to these assessments. Past question papers were available with marking schemes prepared and submitted by the setter of the question paper. Majority question papers are based on essay type and few were on semi structured questions. Structured and Multiple Choice Questions were unable to trace. Almost all the questions were of recalled type. Unrecalled type questions were hardly used. There again opportunity to demonstrate creativity by the undergraduates seems seldom. Both lenient and strict marking were evident while Error of Central Tendency was commonly seen.

Most of the draw backs in relation to teaching learning and assessment methods in the department seem due to the perturbed environment prevailing almost in all the places in and

ments seem limited and most of the teachers as well as world. Some students still do not know the situation of and sacrifices making by the lecturers in the department

to see the overcoming of the mental agony by the undergraduates should not be underestimated. Close upon 50% of the undergraduates in the department are on bursaries and some are even provided with all three meals funded by Philanthropists and NGOO. Non availability of the conducive learning environment along with basic infrastructure facilities seem a primary factor for the drawbacks.

The Senior Lecturers available in the department are with the Masters qualification and majority of them have earned their postgraduate qualification either from Jaffna University. or Kelaniya University. Two have done their masters at Postgraduate Institute of Management (PIM) University of Sri Jayewardenepura. There is only one Ph.D holder at present in the department. There are 06 Grade I Senior Lecturers and 02 Grade II Senior Lecturers, 01 Lecturer (confirmed) and 06 Lecturers (Probationary) 03 Lecturers on contract basis. With this number (18) of academic staff members the department should cater at least for 324 internal full time undergraduates but, there are only 183 undergraduates and 01 M.Phil. student, following courses in the department. The M.Phil student is reading for it on a part time basis. There is a dearth of Professors in Management related disciplines and this has affected the Department of Commerce as well in the Jaffna University.

Irrespective of the environment prevailing in the university and in the area, the academic contribution made by the Lecturers in terms of publishing books and articles and publishing research papers and getting involved in other academic related activities are at an acceptable level.

Considering the above facts, the aspect of Teaching, Learning and Assessment Methods is judged as "SATISFACTORY".

4.3 Quality of Students including Student Progress and Achievements

The UGC selects undergraduates through a separate window, for the B.Com degrees conducted by all the Universities in Sri Lanka. The department of Commerce Jaffna University as well is getting undergraduates through this window. The range of "Z Score" of the undergraduates coming to department of Commerce, University of Jaffna varies from .3 to 1.6. These are comparatively low "Z Scores" and hence the majority inputs are at a low quality. How ever, the annual enrolment of the undergraduates in this department does not exceed 50. In some recent academic years, Eg. 2003/2004, 2004/2005, 2005/2006, 2006/2007, and 2007/2008 this number has decreased drastically as follows: 31, 32, 28, 25, 24 respectively. Accordingly, a big erosion in enrolling undergraduates to follow B.Com degree can be seen. There are 07 repeat candidates, it is not clear to which academic year these undergraduates belong. (Slide No. 40, Students' Achievement of the department - Presentation ó Head Commerce).

Table II Numbers passing the Degree programs annually in the Department of Commerce.

Ac. Year	Total passed	First class		Second Upper		Second Lower		Ordinary Pass	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
2000/2001	71	04	06	26	37	20	28	21	29
2001/2002	48	01	02	14	29	13	27	20	41
2002/2003	52	00	00	15	29	13	25	24	46
2003/2004	54	01	02	13	24	11	20	29	54
2004/2005	50	01	02	21	42	09	18	19	38

numbers completing the degree annually seem good, graduates are allowed to up grade the lower grading(s) at a time when a course seems remote.

When the above facts are considered the aspect of the Quality of Students, Student Progress and Achievements could be judged as “SATISFACTORY”.

4.4. Extent and use of Student Feedback

The number of undergraduates reading for the B.Com. degree in the Department of Commerce is below average. It is close upon 30 to 50 in each batch. From the 3rd year onwards this number is divided into two programs and therefore the numbers in each class is confined to 15 to 25. A well designed qualitative and quantitative student feedback program is possible implemented. This aspect seems given low priority. However, Steps have been taken to implement a student feedback program in the recent past. Yet, the undergraduates maintain a good rapport with the lecturers in the department in relation to their academic and welfare matters. This has to be formalized and implemented for the improvement and development of the teaching learning environment in the department.

When considering the situation of the aspect of the extent and use of student feedback, qualitative and quantitative it could be judged as “SATISFACTORY”.

4.5. Postgraduate Studies

A separate Post-graduate Faculty has been established in the University. 02 Senior Lecturers attached to the Department are involved in Post graduate level teaching in both internal programs and programs conducted by out side organizations in the locality. Some lecturers are involved in supervision of Post graduate Research Thesis. Due to the prevailing logistic conditions in the area the senior members of the department have minimal access to other postgraduate programs conducted by the other Universities located in the other parts of the country. This situation has affected for their career development prospects as well as for the institutional recognition and progress.

There is one student following the research based M.Phil. program in the department and he has to be complete the program within 03 years. The proposal for the research has been submitted and the supervisor has already been appointed. There had been one student in the previous year as well.

When considering the situation as mentioned above, the aspect of the Postgraduate Studies could be judged as “SATISFACTORY”.

4.6. Peer Observations

There is an understanding among the academic members in the department about the importance of having a peer observation as a powerful tool for improving the quality of teaching, learning process. It was observed that the overall attitude of the academic staff members about the peer observation is positive. It was revealed that, an attempt has been made recently to develop a mechanism for peer observation in the department. The existing practice with regard to peer observation in the department is poor. A department based evaluation form is used in a less formal manner and it is hardly used for any developmental activity. A few members use this form for the purpose and majority seem shown least interest

members who have followed the peer observation
of peer observation for themselves without bringing
discussion and improvement if there is any. There were
documentary evidences to prove that question papers are subject to moderation by another
lecturer and answer scripts are marked by two lecturers, which is a general practice in Sri
Lankan Universities. If the question paper moderation could be got done from academics
attached to same discipline in the other Universities the acceptance and the recognition for
the degree program could be improved. The presently available logistic facilities will not
allow this to put in to practice. The departmental meetings are held to discuss various matters
and staff members share their views at these meetings. Minutes of the meetings are
maintained.

***When the above facts are considered the aspect of the Peer Observation could be judged as
“SATISFACTORY”.***

4.7. Skills Development

The skills that have identified and developed by the staff in the Department of Commerce
seem poor. The staff as well as the undergraduates in the department are desperate and they
are in an ambiguous situation due to so many reasons. The undergraduates are of the opinion
that their degree will be no more in the future with the re-structuring of the degree programs
and therefore the recognition for them will be minimal. The lecturers are planning to move to
other departments along with the re-structuring. In other words the Department of Commerce
being one of the oldest discipline and a department in the university, is now has been allowed
to go for a destination of a natural death.

However, the computer based courses and the lecturers and instructors involved in teaching
these courses are with a positive attitude towards the skills development among the
undergraduates. the computer center conducts courses for all three faculties, namely Faculty
of Arts, Faculty of Science, and the Faculty of Management and Commerce who have pooled
their funds into one and established one computer lab which contains close upon 200
computers. Though the Internet facilities are a big constraint in the university due to security
reasons, limited facilities are available for the undergraduates as well as for the lecturers. A
new centre will be established soon with 30 computers with internet facilities for any one to
have access for internet by paying a nominal fee. This endeavour could be a blessing not only
for the undergraduates but for all the academics.

The Subject Review Team observed all four batches of undergraduates and the third years
and the final years were confident with the language of English which demonstrated their
communication skills. The first and the second years showed the interest towards getting their
English knowledge improved.

***When the above facts are considered the aspect of the Skill Development could be judged
as “SATISFACTORY”.***

4.8. Academic Guidance and Counseling

Academic guidance and counselling seems available at the department level and there are
three student counsellors appointed representing the department. The Chief Student
Counsellor for the University is also from the Department of Commerce and they collectively
render a good service for the undergraduates. Almost all the undergraduates except a very
few are facilitated with financial assistance either through Mahapola or bursaries. Some

Free meals free of charge with the financial assistance of ... of the opinion that they should be made available with hostel facilities. Their grievance to this effect seems reasonable. There are vacant rooms in the hostel and they can be allocated to these undergraduates. Some rooms needed to be repaired. This aspect seems neglected by the management which shows student welfare is least looked after. The cost of a meal in the student canteen (lunch) is around Rs. 60/=. The student counsellors may look into this aspect with genuine sympathy.

Hand books and prospectus are published and made available to the undergraduates at the commencement of the degree program. The orientation programme is conducted by the Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce at the beginning of the first year. There is hardly any time set a part in the time tables of the lecturers to enable the students to meet them and discuss matters relating to academic or otherwise.

The students seem seldom take part in extra curricular activities other than the cultural festivals like Thai Pongal, and Saraswathie Pooja. There was little evidence to prove that sports activities are regular events among the undergraduates. The lecturers were of the opinion that the Freshers meet, Interfaculty meet, Management and Commerce (MACOS) Sports festival are held annually with the participation of the undergraduates and the staff.

When the above facts are considered the aspect of the Academic Guidance and Counselling could be judged as “SATISFACTORY”.

Based on the observations made during the visit by the Review Team and as per the facts discussed above the judgments given to those eight aspects under review are as follows:

Aspect Reviewed	Judgment Given
Curriculum Design, Content and Review	Satisfactory
Teaching, Learning and Assessment Methods	Satisfactory
Quality of Students including Student Progress and Achievements	Satisfactory
Extent and Use of Student Feedback	Satisfactory
Postgraduate Studies	Satisfactory
Peer Observation	Satisfactory
Skills Development	Satisfactory
Academic Guidance and Counseling	Satisfactory

5. CONCLUSIONS

For the purpose of convenient readability, conclusions are presented in statement form as given below under respective headings.



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Review

- Availability of optional courses
- Availability of elective courses
- Curriculum revision taking place at different intervals
- Medium of instructions being in both English and Tamil in the first year and only in English from the 2nd year onwards
- Inclusion of the Independent Research in the degree programme
- Practice of the Credit, GPA and Semester systems
- Flexible higher education opportunities with the proposed re-structuring program
- Inter Faculty and Inter Department collaboration and their interdependence
- Availability of a minimal number of Copies of the recommended books in the library

Weakness/Improvements

- Some course units are very basic and seem a repetition of the G.C.E (A/L), which will lead the students to show less interest and encourage them to keep away from these lectures.
- The present weak program structure which demands rational course inclusions
- Non avoidance of overlapping and repetition of courses
- Inadequate directions given to select optional and elective courses
- in appropriate time slot assigned for the Industrial Training
- Inadequacy of IT related, practical oriented courses
- Lack of opportunities for the undergraduates to demonstrate their creative skills
- Non-existence of recommended readings from recognized journals or periodicals
- Non existence of department, industry relationship in the process of curriculum development
- supplying half baked, semi finished products to the market

2. Teaching, Learning and Assessment Methods

Strengths/Good Practices

- The undergraduates are provided with handouts before the lesson commences
- The high enthusiasm among the students for higher education
- The students are supportive to the academics and to the administration
- Continuous assessments included in the assessment method
- Question paper moderation and first and second marking adopted in the assessment method.
- Acceptable level of computer and laboratory usage by the undergraduates

Weakness/Improvements

- Non existence of a teaching plan for any course being conducted
- Sub standards of the handouts provided for the undergraduates
- The very primitive, teacher centered, teaching methods used in the class room
- Non availability of teaching materials such as, Study Guides, Teaching Manuals etc.
- Irrational marks allocations between Continuous Assessment and End Semester Examination
- Existence of lenient/strict marking practices and prevalence of error of Central Tendency

testing (Most of the questions are on essay type)
number of management books in the library
Internet and other knowledge sources

3. Quality of Students, including Student Progress and Achievement

Strengths/Good Practices

- higher level of competition among the undergraduates
- Greater involvement shown in studies by the undergraduates irrespective of the prevailing unproductive learning environment
- The higher number of undergraduates completing the degree within the stipulated time
- The opportunity of getting jobs especially in the private and the NGO's sector just after the completion of the degree program.
- The higher level of employability of the graduates
- Manageable very minimal numbers in each area of specialization

Weakness/Improvements

- Inaccessibility of external subject expertise
- Non availability of students' subject based societies
- Limited interaction between student representations and the administration
- Non availability of adequately defined indicators to measure the student progress
- Non existence of a academic guidance program to up keep the morale of the undergraduates
- The lethargic attitudes among the undergraduates as well as the teachers as they being in an least recognized department

4. Extent and Use of Student Feedback

Strengths/Good Practices

- Positive attitudes among the teachers in the department about the student feed back on teaching and other related activities
- Open door policy practices by all the academic staff members including the Head of the Department
- The dedication and commitment demonstrated towards solving the problems of undergraduates by the academic staff members in the department
- Acceptable level of rapport maintained between teachers and students in order to get the feedback from the students.

Weakness/Improvements

- Non existence of an adequately consistent formal feedback system
- Non existence of a formal Management Information System to make the relevant authorities aware of the prevailing strengths and drawbacks and suggest improvement where necessary
- Less attention paid by the top management and the Administration to the students basic amenities
- Lethargic attitude demonstrated by the Administration towards the students welfare
- Unawareness of students rights by both individual students and student associations
- Lack of steps taken to analyze the feedback and provide timely information for on time improvement.

- Having a Graduate faculty for Higher Degrees
- The trust developed among the postgraduate candidates towards the staff of the department
- The opportunities available for at least the senior academic members to demonstrate their capabilities within the university
- The market potentials for higher degrees already existing as a good seat of education in the peninsula
- Effort taken for publication and participation in workshops and research forums is at an acceptable level.

Weakness/Improvements

- In accessibility to the other Post graduate programs conducted by the other Universities and similar Institutions
- Non existence of proper logistics and other facilities (a proper resource base including computer and internet facilities) to encourage research among the academic members and undergraduates.
- This situation has created a vacuum in the department in establishing a research culture
- Only one research based resource person (with PhDs) in the department
- Communication and transportation inconveniences prevailing in the area prevent academic members going to the academic programs conducted by the other Universities and similar institutions.

6. Peer Observation

Strengths/Good Practices

- There is an understanding and positive attitude among the academic members in the department about the importance of having a peer observation
- Moderation and second marking system are in practice
- All the staff members in the department seem participate in the curricular revision and all other academic activities
- Obtaining and maintaining moderators' reports
- Getting marking scheme along with the question paper
- The departmental meetings are held to discuss matters and staff members share their views at the meeting

Weakness/Improvements

- The poor existing practices with regard to peer evaluation procedures in the department
- No evidence could be found about application of peer evaluation.
- Poor appreciation procedures practiced in relation to better performers
- Non-existence of Team teaching and co- teaching methods with ample availability of human resources in the department
- Inadequate qualified senior staff to observe and guide the junior staff members
- Lack of senior staff in the department to be followed by the junior staff as role models

- Identification of subject related skills to be developed among undergraduates
- Requirement for each student to submit a project report on selected diverse topics
- English the medium of instruction of the programme except in first year
- Enthusiasm and commitment demonstrated and practiced by the staff in the computer laboratories to develop computer and IT related skills among undergraduates
- Pooling of resources by three faculties and trying to get the optimum output from the equipments and human resources in the computer laboratory.

Weakness/Improvements

- Non commitment and identification of discipline wise multi skills to be developed among undergraduates
- Lack of infrastructure and logistic facilities along with opportunities made available to demonstrate different skills of undergraduates
- Non availability of field trips, guest lectures, and other activities like organizing seminars and community related services to make opportunities to improve, organize and develop leadership skills among undergraduates
- Non availability of Student bodies in the department to improve skill-based activities.
- Non existence of programs to encourage undergraduates to organize various non subject related activities to develop organizing skills demanded by the modern business world
- Insufficient opportunities available for the undergraduates to improve their IT skills
- Inadequate space and resources for the staff members in the department to meet their academic requirements

8. Academic Guidance and Counseling

Strengths/Good Practices

- Having an adequate number of both Student Counselors and Student Advisors in the department
- The Senior Student Counselor for the University being also from the department
- Better understanding by both Student counselors and Student Advisors, about the undergraduates and the problems they encounter
- Orientation program conducted by the department and it's suitability for fresh students to get familiarized to the university atmosphere
- Lecturers humanely behavior encouraging the undergraduates to come to them for redress
- Steps taken to facilitate the needy undergraduates with financial and other day to day requirements including meals

Weakness/Improvements

- Non availability of a well thought out, properly designed academic counseling program in the department
- Lack of formal training for the teachers on student guidance and counseling
- Non existence of separate rooms for student counselors and student advisors
- Non-availability of a sound and a common record maintenance system in relation to academic guidance and counseling in the department for future reference
- Non existence of an effective decision making mechanism and implementing the same along with a proper follow up mechanism

student welfare. There are some vacant rooms in the
are of the opinion that they are deprived of giving hostel
closed

- There is hardly any formal time slot set a part in the time tables of the lecturers for the students to come and discuss matters relating to academic or otherwise

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of weaknesses identified, reviewers are of the opinion that they wish to make the following recommendations in order to improve relevance and quality of the special degree programs conducted by the Department of Commerce, namely; B.Com. (Accounting) and B.Com. (Marketing).

- During the first semesters in the first year courses like, Business Mathematics and statistics, Computer Literacy and Application, Basic Cost accounting, Principles of Management, Commercial Law, Fundamentals of Sociology and Psychology may be introduced. These courses seem new, and challenging and relevant for the next phase of studies of the undergraduates. Com 2132 Organizational Behaviour will be too advanced for the undergraduates in the first semester of the second year as he knows nothing about basic human behaviour by then.
- Same courses are repeated in both Departments in the same faculty. . For example, Com. 2233 Economic Analysis for Business, Com 2235 Management science Com.2135 Business and corporate Law. These courses can be conducted more effectively by combining these two groups. The number of undergraduates in the Department of commerce is minimal. Com 2135 Business and Corporate Law is conducted by a visiting lecturer and the cost can be minimized.
- Curriculum structure seems needed changing, to address initially the regional and national problems. Experts advice and guidance may be sought in this connection
- The department offers two four year special degree programs leading to Accounting specialization and Marketing specialization for which undergraduates are directed in the third year. In the First two years they have to follow a common Program which is also conducted by the department. The Common Program can be conducted by the Faculty and direct them for specialization in the third year
- A well structured curriculum with the contribution of external expertise seems necessary introduced with least delay. It seems that, little guidance is available for the undergraduates to select the specialization program they need to follow from the third year. A proper academic counselling program will be necessary for this purpose.
- The department will have to pay serious attention to the assessment methods and procedures adopted for student evaluation process
- It seems necessary to use standard terminology in the hand books and material used for orientation program in order to preserve consistency, professionalism, dignity and the decorum of the academia. If deviating from the common usage of terminology a definition to that effect may be possible i.e. Subject, course, course unit, module has specific definitions, using these terms inter changeably at the whims and fancies of the curriculum designer, could confuse the reader
- It seems useful to form an industry advisory council for obtaining stakeholders' input for the curriculum designing and revision process. The role of an alumni association in this regard cannot be under estimated. Therefore necessity for forming such associations will strengthen the working capacity of the department

ent Feedback, Peer evaluation, Academic Counselling and
ults in relation to student progress and achievements and
otesting, obedient and docile behaviour of undergraduates

seem encouraging to work with them

- Student Counsellor's role in connection with problems faced by the undergraduates, the grievance handling, and their day to day welfare is vital and significant. Therefore a proper training may be necessary to develop and equip the Student Counsellors with required skills. As the Student Counsellors are the link between the students and Administration of the University, providing their requirements i.e. basically, a room and a computer, will help smooth functioning of the entire system
- It is important to establish alumni association for the department/faculty to get their support to develop market oriented degree programmes for the department
- Reasonable amount of space and resources are necessary provided for the lecturers to make their academic contribution efficient and effective
- To improve the employability of the graduates of the department, it is advisable to incorporate practical training as a compulsory credit course for the final year second semester.
- It is appropriate to organize study tours by the department for the undergraduates ensuring academic staff member participation in the same.

NDA FOR THE REVIEW VISIT

Day-01- (09.06.2009 Tuesday)

08.00-09.00	Private Meeting of Review Panel wit QAA Council Representatives
09.00-09.30	Discuss the Agenda for the Visit
09.30-10.30	Meeting(s) with the Vice Chancellor/ Chairman, Internal QA Unit/Dean, Head of the Dept/Head, Faculty QA Cell .etc., (Working Tea)
10.30-11.30	Department Presentation on the Self Evaluation Report
11.30-12.30	Discussion
12.30-13.30	Lunch
13.30-14.00	Observing Teaching ó Practical Class
14.00-15.00	Observing Departmental Facilities
15.00-16.00	Observing Other Facilities (Library, IT Resource Centre, Hostel, Health Centre etc)
16.00-17.00	Meeting with Department Academic Staff
17.00-18.00	Brief Meeting of Reviewers

Day-02 – (10.06.2009 Wednesday)

09.00-09.30	Observing Teaching ó Lecture
09.30-10.00	Observing Teaching ó Lecture
10.00-11.00	Observing Documents (Working Tea)
11.00-11.30	Observing Teaching ó Practical class
11.30-12.00	Meeting with Technical Staff and Other Non- Academic Staff
12.00-12.30	Meeting with Undergraduate
12.30-13.30	Lunch
13.30-14.00	Observing Studentø Presentation
14.00-14.30	Observing Teaching ó Lectures
14.30-15.00	Meeting with Post graduate students
15.00-15.30	Meeting with Special Degree Students ó (Third and Fourth Year)
15.30-16.30	Brief Meeting of Reviewers

Day-03 – (11.06.2009 Thursday)

09.00-09.30	Observing Teaching ó Practical Class
09.30-10.30	Meeting with Senior Studentsø Counsellor and Student Counsellors
10.30-11.00	Reviewers Private Discussion
11.00-12.00	Meeting with Head and Staff for Reporting
12.00-13.00	Lunch
13.00-17.00	Report Writing