

1. Title of the Practice

Counselling Cell/Mentoring Cell at VESCOP (Samadhan)

2. Objectives of the Practice

Higher education is the last phase of the formal education process. Students face a number of challenges in achieving their goals during this period. At VESCOP, we have a counselling cell, which runs with the following objectives:

1. To provide guidance to students in academics, co-curricular and extracurricular activities for holistic development.
2. To provide platforms to students where they can openly express themselves and share their problems; whether it is related to academics or not.
3. To guide them about professional values and ethics
4. To motivate the students to give their best.

3. The Context

We have come a long way in the 21st century and the education system is seeing a change, with practical and experiential learning taking a lead on age-old instructional models. While college degrees are an important part of education, they are not enough. We still need to assure essential life skills to kickstart a career and not to mention, finding a job in the field. This is the time for students to decide the course of their life and the pressure can cause major mental health issues. The diversity cultures and experiences could further lead students into isolation and affect mental and emotional health. Everyone's journey is different, but they always want to reach the goal. Through our counselling and mentoring programs we help the student identify "the Why" of their journey which help them set various goals and milestones and help them take tough decisions in their career.

4. The Practice

Our *Gurukul* (VESCOP) follows the *Parampara* (tradition) of *Guru-Shishya* (Mentor-student) with the former being instrumental not only in transferring knowledge and skills but also eradicating social, economic or financial barrier a student faces in today's age of information and fiercely competitive world. VESCOP has a counselling/mentoring cell, which takes care of the allotment of mentors to every student enrolled in the programme. Our counselling cell focuses on systematically exploring ways to reduce unnecessary stress in student's academic environment. By expanding the access to mentorship and counselling we

ensure to promote strong faculty-student, peer-to-peer, and connections to support student well-being.

During allotment, care is taken that Mentor to mentee ratio will not cross beyond 1:15 for the UG programme. For the PG programme, this ratio is a maximum 1:5. There is a set SOP for the mentoring process. We developed the SOP manual because we believe that adherence to its guidelines will have a positive impact on student success. As per the SOP by the counselling cell, the responsibilities of a mentor include:

- Discussing specific mentee related needs
- Setting goals for students (professional: personal domain) and decide strategies which will help students cultivate a sense of “performance with purpose”

Mentor cell also acts as an active platform and the connective link between student and administration to resolve various minor daily difficulties in students’ schedule. **Figure 7.2.2(a)** shows the overall workflow of the counselling cell.

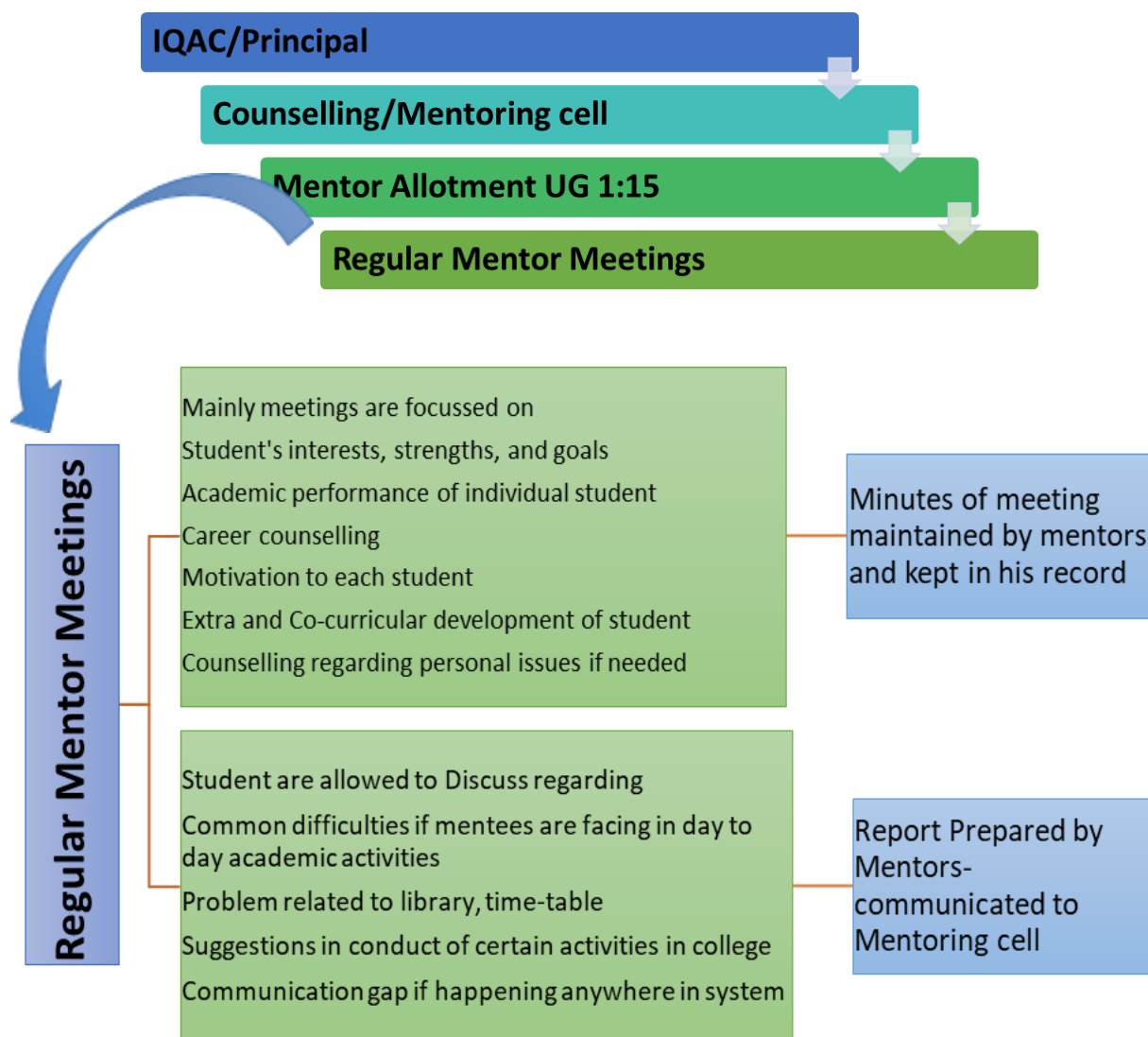


Figure 7.2.2 (a): Workflow of Mentoring Cell

The counselling cell also directs students who require professional counselling to the expert counsellor as per need (**Figure 7.2.2 (b)**). Parents are also important components of students' mental well-being; hence, through PTM our teachers interact with parents to understand their concerns.

Over the years, the counselling cell has transitioned from routine meetings to a more inclusive developmental process. Previously counselling cell used to conduct only mentor meetings and record the meeting minutes. With positive student feedback, we have integrated and evolved various proformas right from student enrolment, to implementing mandatory student “interest-based survey” which forms a structural base for 1st mentor: mentee introductory meeting. Periodic mentee meeting reports are generated to identify common student concerns, which are resolved at the earliest. The mentee profile includes detailed

information on academic performance and student’s participation in curricular, co-curricular and extracurricular activities throughout the academic timeline.

As the mentor:mentee relationship evolves, the counselling cell strives to improve by providing updated formats to mentors which help in assisting the mentoring process (**Figure 7.2.2(c)**).

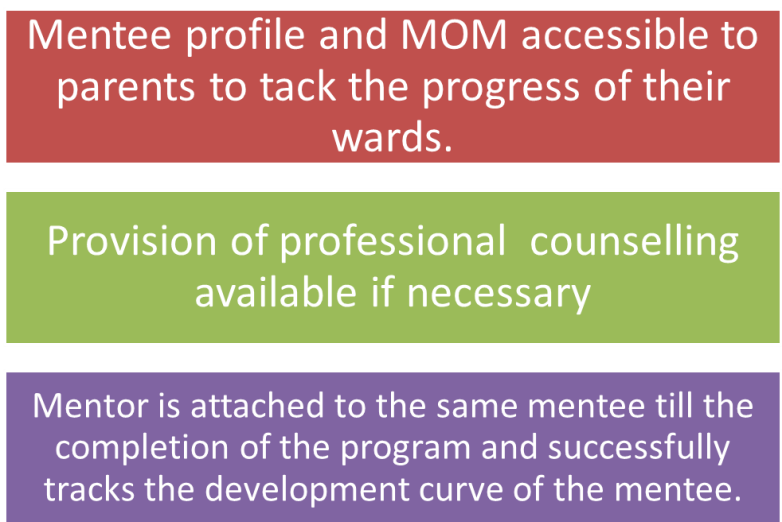


Fig 7.2.2 (b): USP of Mentoring Cell at VES COP

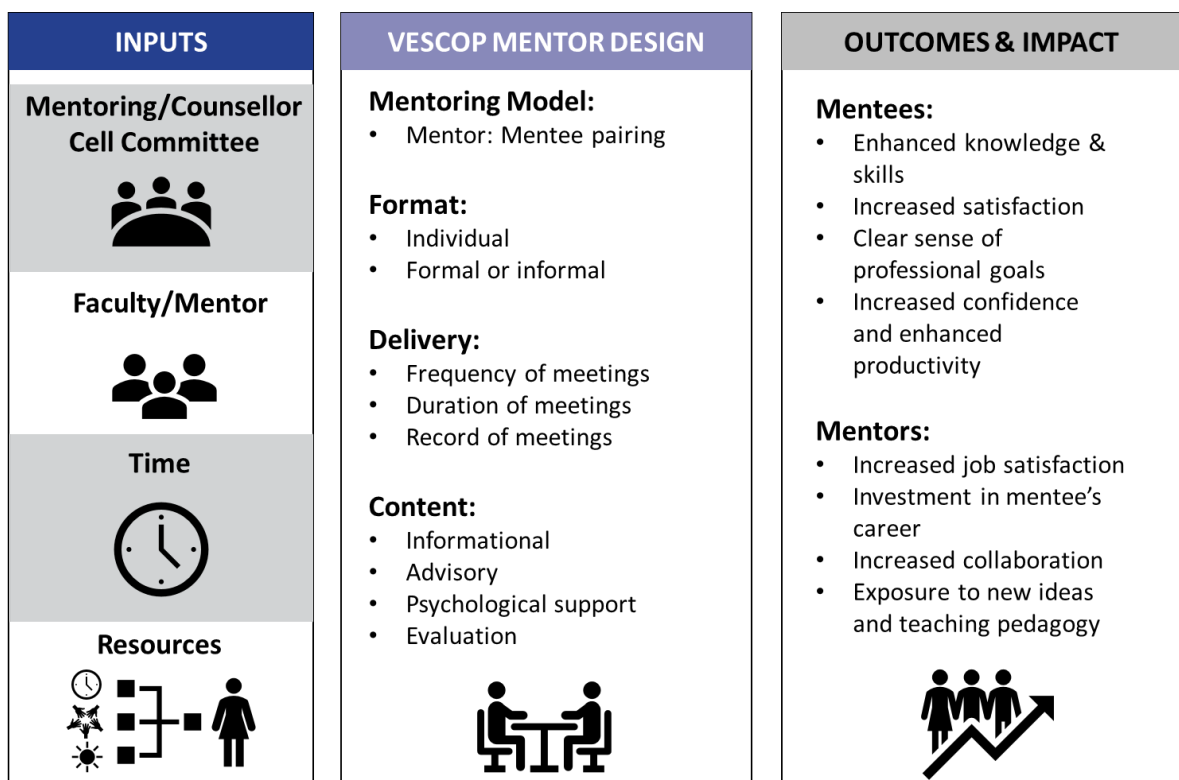


Figure 7.2.2 (c): Diagrammatic Summary of Counselling cell Objective, Process and Outcome

5. Evidence of Success

Success of systematic mentorship initiatives can be evaluated in the following areas [refer **Figure 7.2.2 (d)** for summary]:

- Competencies and satisfaction of the mentor
- Quality of support provided by the mentors
- Achievement of defined goals, objectives and outcomes of mentoring
- Quality of program resources

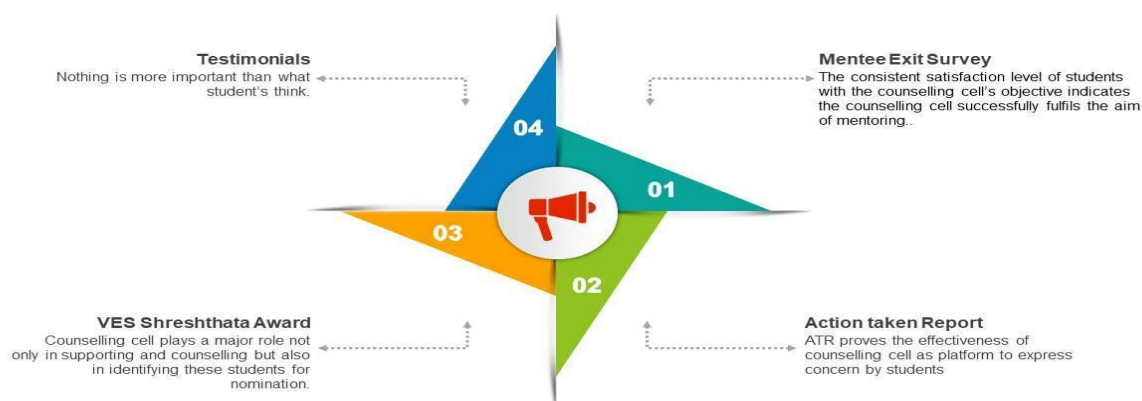
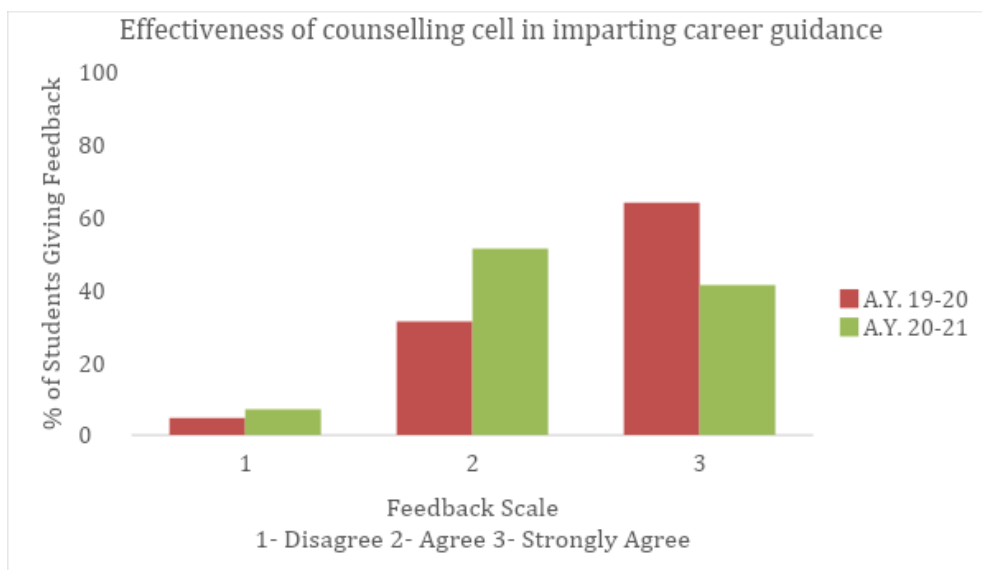
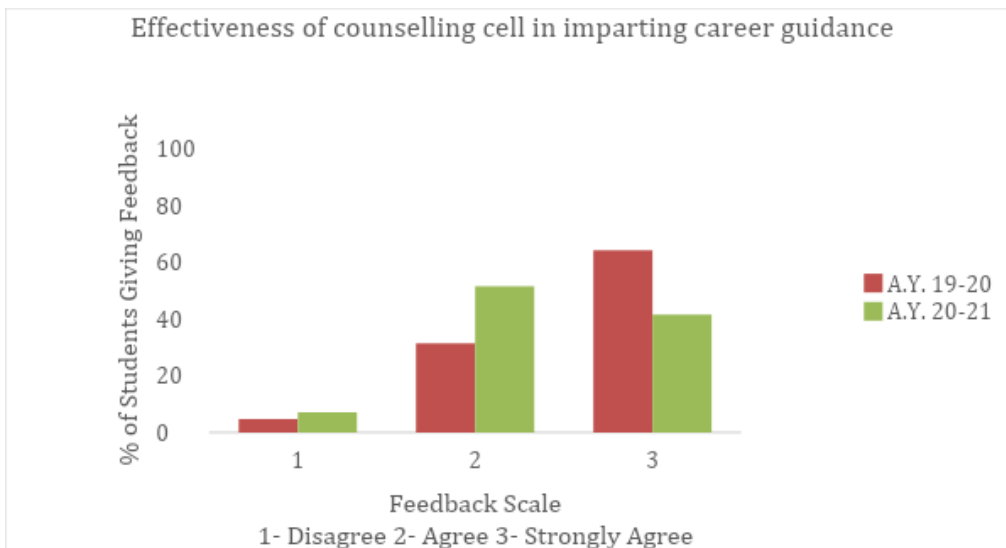
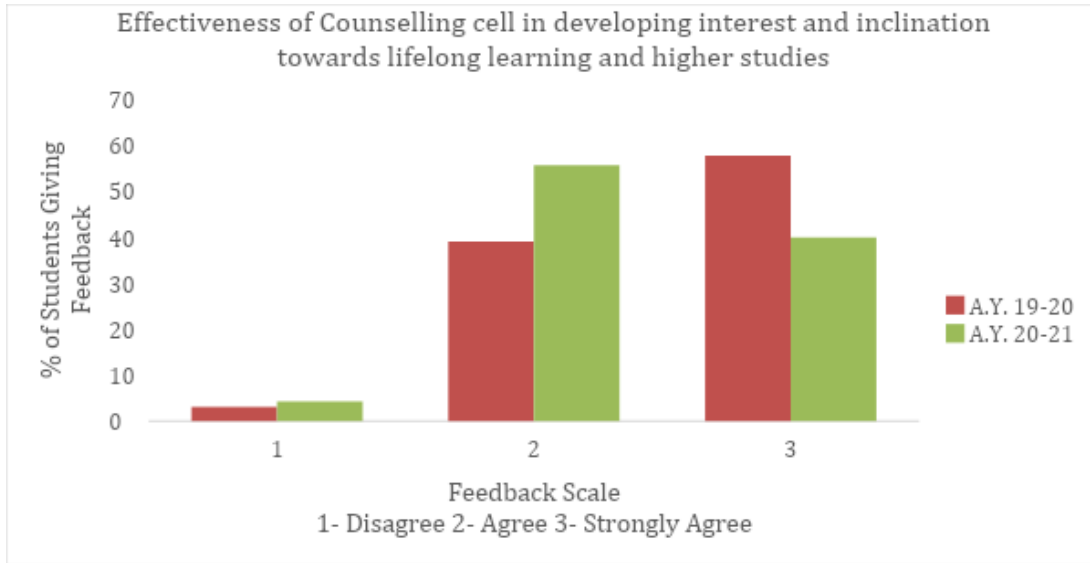


Figure 7.2.2 (d) : Summarising Evidence of Success

Mentee Exit Survey: its purpose is to assess the overall experience within the counselling process and identify opportunities to improve counselling function. At VES COP, we collect student exit surveys which is one of the tools for identifying the effectiveness of the counselling process [(figure 7.2.2(e)).

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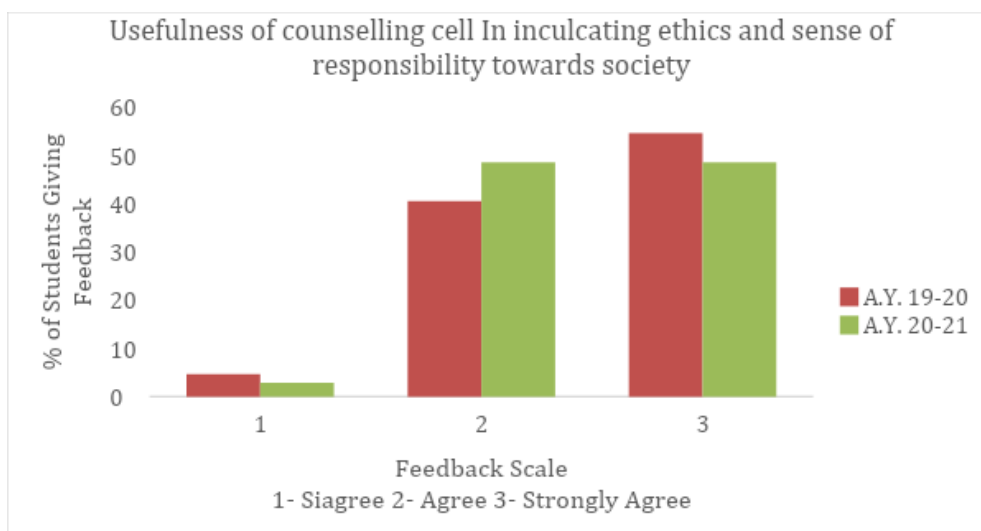


Figure 7.2.2(e): Effectiveness of the counselling cell

2. ATR on student's Feedback through counselling Meetings

One of the objectives of counselling cell is to provide a common platform for all the students to share their concerns and their problems which can be resolved through the counselling cell.

Following is the sample ATR.

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MENTOR MEETING REPORT ODD SEMESTER A.Y. 2019-20

Mentor Meeting of F.Y., S.Y., T.Y. and Final year B. Pharm was conducted on 31st August 2019. Saturday Time: 12:45 pm to 1:15 pm (S.Y. to Final Year) and 1.45 pm – 2.15 pm (F.Y.B.Pharm)

Following were the common concerns raised by students of different years which were conveyed to Principal Madam by individual Mentors and action taken.

Sr. No.	Common Concerns raised by students	Action Taken Report
Related to Infrastructure		
1.	Related to Washrooms: Washroom on 3rd floor is not available for use since few days. There are issues with door locks, flush and lights on 4th floor washrooms.	Issue communicated to Mr. Milind and was resolved by September 7 th 2019.
2.	Issues regarding mic system in 3rd floor classroom- 3 rd floor mic system many times don't function	Problem communicated to Mr. Milind and was resolved via contacting technical staff. Mic system of 3 rd floor was replaced on 03.09.2019.
3.	Required AC in classroom	It was explained to students that it will lead to higher electricity bill which is directly related to higher fees, and college prefers to be conservative when it comes to providing luxurious facilities and burdening students financially.
4.	Library books: Students want more copies of Anand Narayan book for Biotechnology and Brian Lockwood book for Nutraceuticals	Library in charge was made aware with the student's need and requested to consider it while making next purchase. Soft copies if possible, can be made available through library for these books.
Time - table Related		
1.	T.Y.B.Pharm: Tuesday and Wednesday one hour Gap in between lectures	Conveyed to time table in-charge

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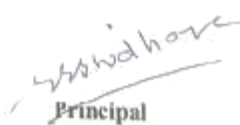
Sr. No.	Common Concerns raised by students	Action Taken Report
2.	S.Y. B. Pharm- Students requested to shift Thursday 4-5 p.m. lecture to Saturday 3-4 p.m. or any other time as 4 to 5 is very hectic for them	Conveyed to time table in-charge
Academics Related		
1	Guidance sessions: Students requested for guidance sessions for career opportunities after B. Pharm, choices to make for post-graduation studies.	C2C in charge MS. Chaitali Surve was informed about students request regarding organizing such session under initiative of DISHA. After one session on career avenues already conducted on 13 th August 2019 another Session was also planned on careers in Toxicology in month of December
2	OC Lab Apparatus – One group of mentees mentioned broken apparatus were given in OC lab (Both SY and TY students)	Issue communicated to lab technician and and HOD
3	Students mentioned they would prefer usage of combination of chalk and Board along with other multimedia methods for classroom teaching	All faculty were informed about students' preferences in learning methodology. And requested to incorporate blend of chalk and board and multimedia in teaching.

All the resolved actions were communicated to respective classes.

Compiled By,



Mentor Cell In charge



Principal

Dr. Supriya Shidhaye

3. VES Shreshthta Award:

This award is bestowed on students by VES whose life is far tougher, battle adversities and yet manage to excel in studies and find the time and emotional energy to give back to society. These are chosen from VES group of institutes comprising 28 institutes and approximately 18000 students. Every year VESCOP students have been the recipient of this award (**Figure 7.2.2(f)**). Counselling cell plays a major role not only in supporting and counselling but also in identifying these students for nomination.



Figure 7.2.2(f): VESCOP students bagging the VES Sreshthta award every year

4. Testimonials from the students:

The mentoring system at VESCOP is really good, and it helps a lot in building interpersonal skills and also helps us talk about issues we are unable to talk about with anyone else.

Mentoring helped me a lot in developing my personality. It helped me talk about stuff more openly. It also helped me identify the problems and find the solutions easily instead of getting stressed out.

Ashish Chawla

The mentoring system very useful for me. This helped me in clearing the doubts I had with respect to pharmacy as a career, with my overall development and even choosing a college for my masters program.

The Mentoring System focused not just on how we perform in our academics, but also in the overall growth as an individual. I am glad that due to these mentoring sessions, we as students are able to open up and talk and gain guidance about the industry from our mentors.

Jasleen Kaur Chass

6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required

Non-cooperation of students: It has been observed that learners are not willing to disclose their problems and be counselled by the teacher due to negative attitudes towards guidance and counselling. It takes lot of time to break the ice. Making students understand the need to communicate their inner feelings is a challenging task for the Mentor.

Apart from this, there are some operational challenges including tracking the outcome of mentoring.

i. Monitoring student dropouts:

a. Drop out students don't report college regularly, and hence they don't remain in touch with their mentors.

ii. **Mentor:Mentee pairing**

Since the ideal association of Mentor and Mentee is for four years, if any faculty leaves the Institute, students have to adjust to a new mentor.

7. Case study

The most direct measure of the effectiveness of the mentor program is, to track the mentee's progress toward that goal

Ms. Kajal Gore is one such motivational story for all mentors as well as mentees, who makes us believe in the mentoring system and its effectiveness. Ms. Kajal struggled very hard during her initial years at VESCOP in her academic journey. With help of her mentors, she bounced back from initial set back and showed great progress over the years not only in academics but also in extra and co-curricular activities. She even represented as the delegate at model UNITED NATIONS conference representing India in Malaysia 2019.

Today Kajal is now a senior associate in Brandcare Asia and **Figure 7.2.2 (g)** and **Figure 7.2.2 (h)** traces her journey.

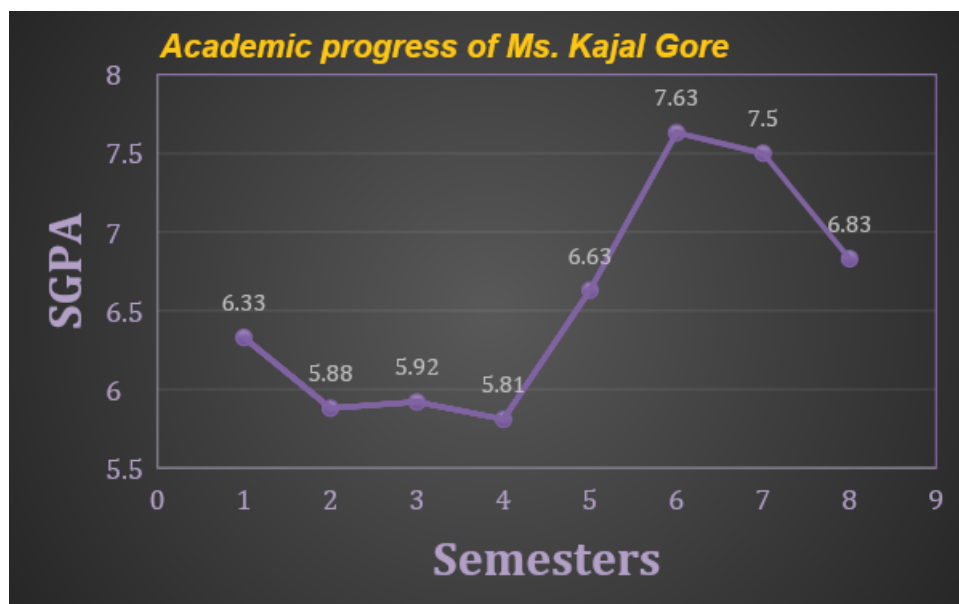


Figure 7.2.2 (g): Academic progress of Ms. Kajal Gore

Completed Vista campus Ampassaor/Partner internship at IIM Bangalore and Represented VESCOP as Campus ambassador at

IIM Bangalore

IIM Rohtak

Internshala

BITS Pilani

United Nations conference (Malaysia)



Selected as Co-manager of Eximius 2019, Entrepreneurship Summit of IIM Bangalore. She was one out of 30 Co-managers each leading 30 campus ambassadors across india



Joined Pitchman communications and in no time, got promoted as a senior business associate



Working as a senior associate at Brandcare medical Advertising

Figure 7.2.2 (h) Accelerated career growth of Ms. Kajal Gore