

7.2. BEST PRACTICES:

Nestled in the foothills of Himalayas, Doon University being a premier University of the Government of Uttarakhand, sees itself as the reservoir of the social, cultural and environmental values of Uttarakhand. Keeping these values in its focus, our best practices revolve around the socio-economic and cultural needs of the inhabitants of the young state of Uttarakhand. The University strives to make a distinctive mark by inculcating and implementing the best of the available resources. For this purpose, Doon University offers academic programmes in cutting edge disciplines which are likely to make the students employable by the end of their studies. The University promotes an active participation and involvement of the community in its extra curricular events. The premises of the University are kept open to nature lovers. The practices which we deem as our best are:

- Academic Programmes in Cutting Edge Disciplines
- Harela Paath- syncing Human with Nature

Best Practice 1: Academic Programmes in Cutting Edge Disciplines

Dehradun is a city known for its premier educational institutions. However, for the purpose of higher learning, the students not only from the city, but the entire state of Uttarakhand had to migrate to Delhi or other metropolitan cities. This out migration from Uttarakhand due to lack of educational opportunities added to the already existing emigration for the search of employment.

To curb the emigration from the hill state of Uttarakhand, as mentioned in its Mission Statement, this state university was set up to “offer state-of-the-art educational programmes in cutting-edge disciplines of regional, national and international relevance; and to provide a challenging and conducive environment for scholar-researchers to engage in pursuit of excellence.”

The academic programs in cutting edge disciplines which were previously not available in the entire Himalayan region were commenced at Doon University. These flagship programmes include:

- MA Integrated Programme in Foreign Languages (Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Spanish)
- Bachelor programme in Design
- MA Integrated Programme in Media & Communication Studies
- M.Sc. Environmental Science (EVS)
- M.Sc. Environmental Science (with specialization in Natural Resource Management (NRM))
- M. Tech. Environmental Technology
- Ph.D. Environmental Science
- Master in Social Work
- MA in Theater
- Executive MBA
- PhD in Management
- Certificate courses in foreign languages
- Certificate courses in regional languages of Uttarakhand

These competitive courses make the learners highly employable and encourage entrepreneurship. The curriculum design of the courses reflects the focus of the international job market. At the same time, region specific requirements are also taken into account. Our students are prepared in such a manner that they stand at par with international standards and can compete against the best of the candidates. For example, while teaching courses on tourism and translation, international tourism destinations are discussed, at the same time, a lot of emphasis is placed on the potential of tourist destinations in Uttarakhand. Our students are particularly trained to showcase the regional distinctiveness in their respective foreign languages. They also learn to engage with the spiritual character of this state. To render this teaching learning experience more vibrant and engaging, the University hosts international students, interns and teachers from the respective countries whose languages are taught here.

The conventionally popular courses like BSc, MSc, PhD in fundamental sciences such as Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics, Computer Science, Biological Sciences, MA and MSc in Economics, Psychology, Anthropology, BBA, B.Com, MBA, BA Hons, MA and PhD in English,

MSc Geology and MA Geography are also offered to cater to the diversity of choices of the youth of Uttarakhand and the rest of India. The idea is to motivate our students to find and create employment opportunities within their home state so that emigration can be curbed in the long run.

Best Practice 2: Harela Paath- Syncing Human with Nature

Doon University is not just nestled in the foothills of Shivalik mountains of the Himalayas; it is also adjacent to the Rajaji National Park. One gets a picturesque view of the huge forest on the one side and the beautiful mountains on the other. On top of that, the University campus is located on the banks of the local river Rispana, which is derived from the Sanskrit word Rishiparna meaning leaves of the hermitage. The river and the forest are in the immediate neighborhood of the University, which ensures a huge biodiversity of flora and fauna on and off the campus. In line with humanity's greatest thinkers, the stakeholders of Doon University also believe that we understand ourselves better when we start to explore and understand nature. For the well being of everyone around us, this beautiful campus is not reserved only for the students, faculty members and other staff of the university, but is open for inhabitants of the local neighborhood.

To put the intent to practice, Harela Path has been inaugurated within the university campus. Harela is a local festival of Uttarakhand. It symbolizes the synchrony of human beings with Mother Nature. On the occasion of this festival, plantation drives are carried out across the state, hence also in the University campus. University teams are also sent outside to plant rare saplings, including medicinal plants, at various locations in the neighborhood of the University. This festival is celebrated at the end of the summer, when the monsoon hits the state. It normally falls in the month of July which is considered the best season for plantation.

The Harela Paath is a long stretch of pavement, bordered with trees, running along the length and breadth of the entire campus. With greenery on all sides, Harela Paath is a visual treat to the flaneurs of Kedarpuram. The biodiversity that the University houses ensures that the morning and evening walks are filled with the chirping of birds. The senior citizens in the vicinity of the University often spend their evening hours with their grandchildren at the Harela Path because the campus is a safe and friendly space for them. The green landscape around the Paath is also a preferred space amongst the students where one may find them spending leisure time after their class hours.

As environment protection and conservation of biodiversity are major concerns of the University, its members, particularly the hostel residents, are encouraged to cycle their way to the classrooms. The University also observes a No Vehicle Day on the first Monday of every month to revitalize the love for walks among its students and teachers alike.