



St Thomas College, Kozhencherry

Strategic Plan 2021 - 2030

Internal Quality Assurance Cell

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INTRODUCTION

Higher education scenario is traversing through a period of unprecedented changes. What will be the impact of these changes in the vision and mission of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)? Educational systems need to customise to address the altering patterns in educational needs and goals. Economic and societal development demands a well-educated workforce, equipped to face global challenges. Traditional systems need to accommodate these demands without violating the institutional vision and mission. Hence the need to design and provide new programmes and the corresponding state-of-the-art facilities.

Management by Planning or Objectives is the tool to cope with the rapidly changing demands. Planning is the process of seeking innovative ways to make efficient use of the resources available, mobilise resources, and implement policies for the qualitative enhancement of any institution. It involves design, implementation, management, and evaluation. Change has to become the institutional culture. Improved management planning is inevitable. Yet it is frequently ignored or not given due importance on account of failure to accept the inevitability of change and /or the failure to comprehend the accelerating rate of change. Diligent delineation of institutional mission, goals, policy, systematic and periodic evaluation of the policies and programmes, detailed planning and budgeting, careful evaluation of programme implementation are mandatory for organizational efficiency. Planning being the seminal function of effective management, it is pertinent to involve all the stakeholders in the process in some significant manner. Incorporation of them into the total management process will enable the conception and implementation of novel ideas, and augment performance outcomes ensuing from commitment generated by participative approach and development of the continuing supply of experienced, enthusiastic and efficient management personnel capable of dealing with the demand for change. Policies, procedures, and evaluative techniques can be formulated and practised with enthusiasm and increased productivity.

Good planning demands specific objectives to accomplish at the individual and institutional level, which is quite ignored in most institutions. Resistance to planning will reflect in a variety of ways. The conflict between the wish for change and fear of change will lead to complexities. Reluctance to work within a requisite plan will obstruct any forward movement. Plans must be dynamic, ever-changing as dictated by the demands, without violating institutional vision. Any realistic appraisal of the contemporary scenario will indicate the need for a grid for the future.

An institution that follows Management by Objectives is labelled as one that knows what it wants and pursues the same. Formulation of institutional objectives and periodic revision of the same form the robust culture of any educational institution scaling towards excellence. The strategic plan of St Thomas College has been formulated in consultation with *Management by Objectives in Higher Education* by James L. Harvey which proposes that faculty and administrators establish performance objectives annually in the following broad areas:

1. Routine/customary: Routine duties of the position/rank.
2. Problem-solving: Identify and solve major problems.
3. Innovation: Add new elements to the programmes.
4. Professional growth: Encourage teaching and non-teaching staff to grow professionally.
5. Community service: Engage in community activities beneficial to the person, college, and community.

Much effort has gone into the planning process to make it a concerted effort, realising that planning is everybody's job. The planning process is founded on the history and culture of the institution and has endeavoured to glean input from all stakeholders as potential managers. Careful consideration and concerted effort have been made to identify the areas that need changes and to analyse them in detail to fix the priority. The plans participatively

conceived and coordinated through the decision-making process can impact astounding results.

During the planning process, the past and present of the institution have been evaluated for formulating the comprehensive long-range planning, which includes the following steps:

1. Policy review
2. Assessment of the past
3. Assessment of the present
4. Anticipated opportunities
5. Anticipated challenges
6. Strategic goals
7. Suggested priorities
8. Planned programme strategy

I. Policy Review

Standing on the threshold of the implementation of the new National Educational Policy, St Thomas College has realised the need to review its policy regarding academics, administration, and community service.

II. Assessment of the Past

St Thomas College, Kozhencherry, which proudly bears a rich heritage of approximately seven decades, had its genesis as a haven of quality higher education, particularly to the rural population in the eastern region of central Travancore in Kerala, as envisaged by the founding fathers—late Most Rev. Dr Juhanon Mar Thoma Metropolitan and late Rev. K.T. Thomas Kurumthottickal. Established in 1953, and owned and administered by the Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar, the institution holds aloft its motto “**Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam - For the greater glory of God**” that foregrounds the academic and ethical excellence envisioned by the founders in all its endeavours ever since its inception.

The institution has always endeavoured to practise its stated policy of enlightening, ennobling, enriching, and empowering the academic community to address the global challenges by fostering a conducive ambience for academic excellence, holistic development, and research. In its stride towards excellence, the institution is committed to the community as well.

Vision

To foster academic excellence, moral integrity, and social commitment in young men and women.

Mission

- To mould intellectually well-trained young men and women by providing a conducive academic environment.
- To equip the faculty and students to meet the challenges of modern trends in the educational field by encouraging research and development.
- To provide quality higher education to the rural population in the eastern region of central Travancore in Kerala.
- To impart sound Christian liberal education and to promote the holistic development of individuals.
- To undertake community-related research studies and extension programmes beneficial to the community.

Assessment of the Present

Initially affiliated to Travancore University and later to the University of Kerala, the institution is currently affiliated to Mahatma Gandhi University, Kerala. Since its establishment, the institution has expanded exponentially and has made concentrated efforts to achieve its goals in tune with the mission and vision. The institution is re-accredited nationally by NAAC with an A Grade and is ranked in the 100-150 band scale

in NIRF 2020. The National Commission for Minority Educational Institutions of India has declared the institution as a Minority Educational Institution with effect from 2013. With 12 Undergraduate and 10 Postgraduate programmes in the aided sector, three Undergraduate programmes in the unaided sector, and Doctoral programmes in English, Botany, Zoology, Physics, and Commerce, the institution is reckoned as one of the premier institutions under Mahatma Gandhi University. The institution also offers customised certificate courses, designed by the Departments, to strengthen and supplement the existing programmes by enhancing the creative and proactive faculties of the students. Courses to hone the soft skills and life skills of the students are also imparted to suit the current global demands. The qualitative strength of the faculty is commendable with the majority of the teachers holding either Ph. D. or M.Phil. degrees and the others pursuing doctoral programmes. Active faculty involvement in Curriculum Revision Committees, Board of Studies and other academic bodies; participation in Faculty Development Programmes; organisation of and participation in seminars, workshops and conferences at the International/National/Regional levels; and adaptation of ICT-enabled teaching methodology have equipped and enriched the academic environment to address the accelerating alterations in the educational scenario. With its current strength of 1916 students, the institution remains as a beacon of light and hope in its persistent quest for excellence on a lofty hill adjacent to the Pamba river in Kozhencherry.

Strength

- One of the premier institutions in central Kerala, located in a serene area with ample space to develop.
- Administered by an efficient and vision-driven Management.
- Vibrant alumni chapters across the world who consider their alma mater as their springboard and wholeheartedly support the institution in all its endeavours.
- Special Grade College with 15 Undergraduate, 10 postgraduate and 5 doctoral programmes.

- Competent, committed, research-oriented, and enthusiastic faculty.
- DST-FIST supported science departments.
- Enrollment ratio of around 90%.
- Institutional commitment to better its academic performance by providing academic exposure to all students irrespective of their social/economic background.
- Student support programmes like noon-meal, Anpu, scholarships, remedial, counselling, and mentoring.
- Spacious library with INFLIBNET and reprographic facilities.

Weakness

- Alienation from industrial areas poses a hindrance to industry-institution interaction
- Lack of on-campus residential facility for faculty and male students.
- Inaccessibility by public transport facility.
- Inadequate water facility.
- Dearth of library staff and non-teaching staff.
- Lack of proper Management Information System for e-governance.
- Student achievement in Sports and Cultural events needs improvement.
- Inadequate number of research publications.
- Lack of power-support system and wifi campus with firewall.
- Deficient research facilities.
- Inadequate collaborations with other institutions.
- Dearth of updated software and Braille scripts for differently-abled students.

III. Anticipated Opportunity

- Research-oriented faculty members can be encouraged to undertake more research projects and publications.
- Collaborations with national and international institutions with the help of faculty and alumni.
- Increase the enrolment of faculty and students in MOOC courses.
- Design and implementation of new certificate courses by each Department.
- Faculty contribution to SWAYAM and NPTEL curriculum.
- Expansion of photovoltaic system for power management and revenue generation.
- Vocational training for students and the community.
- Enhancement of participation and achievement in Sports at institutional, university, state and national levels.
- Eco-friendly, zero-waste, green campus.
- 100 % Divyangan-friendly campus.
- Implementation of strategies for the identification and improvement of students with learning disabilities and challenges and creating a friendlier atmosphere for them.
- Development of a Community Centre.
- Collaboration with research institutions, NGOs, industries etc.
- Initiation of Start-up centre.
- Develop as a technology-enabled learning space.
- Provision of accommodation facilities for male faculty and students.
- Maximum utilization of land to promote agriculture on the campus.

- State-of-the-art infrastructural facilities.
- Augmentation in rainwater harvesting and groundwater recharging facility.
- Introduction of more memorial lectures and public events for knowledge dissemination across society.
- Reaching out to school students of the neighbouring areas to infuse more scientific insight and language proficiency.
- More planned usage of campus and improvement of its flora and fauna making the campus more interactive with nature.

IV. Anticipated Challenges

- Incorporating more certificate courses and enrichment courses as a routine programme.
- Low socio-economic profile of the students.
- Tapping the full potential of Alumni.
- Fund mobilisation for the development of the institution.
- Office automation to increase administrative efficiency.
- Addressing delay in the sanctioning of teaching and non-teaching posts with more liaison work with the government.
- Ensuring state-of-the-art infrastructure facilities to enhance and ensure academic excellence.
- Enhancement of academic results.
- Profile enhancement of the institution through social media, public relations and liaison work.
- Improve the transportation facility to a college campus by college bus, pedestrian-friendly public roads, etc.

V. Strategic Goals

1. Curricular Aspects

- a. Commencement of more interdisciplinary programmes based on requirements and global trends.
- b. Apply for Postgraduate Programmes in Social Work, Business Management, Computer Science, Psychology, History, and Hindi and graduate programme in Psychology.
- c. Regularisation of B.A. Hindi programme.
- d. Equipping teachers and students to utilize a blended education system.
- e. Design the programme curriculum with multiple complementary courses. Eg. BA Economics with Mathematics and Political Sciences as complementary courses.
- f. Introduction of more certificate courses enriched with skill development initiatives.
- g. Development of Centre for Language Studies with faculties of English, German, French, etc.
- h. Develop as an independent department.
- i. Starting new integrated courses.

2. Teaching, Learning, and Evaluation

Information technology has impacted a shift from the traditional “instructional” paradigm to a “learning” paradigm which demands lecture modes as well as a demonstration or hands-on training. The following are to be materialised for the same:

- a. Use of digital learning and flip classrooms facilities.
- b. Develop a strategy to ensure 100% result in PG classes UG programmes. Remedial coaching should become the culture of the institution.

- c. Peer learning, flip classroom, and digital learning mechanism to be encouraged.
- d. E-content development by students and teachers. Open Educational Repository to be maintained.
- e. Meticulous conduct of bridge courses.
- f. Identification and specific training and orientation for slow learners and advanced learners.
- g. Mentoring and tutorial initiatives should be enriched.
- h. 100% faculty with PhD degree within ten years.
- i. Zero per cent drop out.

3. Research, Innovation, and Extension

As facilitation of research demands investment in space and infrastructure, collaborative research with leading institutions needs to be considered. A critical mass of researchers will impact the institutional culture as well as societal or community development. The institution can reach out to the community in association with Panchayats and NGOs. The following areas need focused attention:

- a. Elevate the college to the level of a nodal centre of excellence.
- b. Ensure 100 per cent of teachers publish at least one research paper in high-impact or UGC-CARE listed journals every year.
- c. All PG departments to be elevated as research centres by 2030.
- d. Research orientation to be given to all PG students.
- e. Encourage the faculty to submit the project proposals to various funding agencies.
- f. Motivate and support faculty to be a part of research, academic and professional forums.

- g. Increase the number of linkages and MoUs with national and international institutions for collaboration.
- h. Encourage visits by faculty and students to renowned higher education institutions, research labs, industry, libraries.
- i. Promote inter-disciplinary research.
- j. Initiate hands-on training for the students and nearby communities in mushroom cultivation, soap making, apiculture, horticultural practices, landscaping, organic and zero budget farming, etc.
- k. Develop a Centre for Performing Arts.
- l. Develop a media production centre for the dissemination of knowledge and FM radio for vernacular broadcasting as part of extension activities.
- m. Conduct international seminars/webinars every year.
- n. Increase subscription to Scopus-indexed journals.
- o. Formation of IPR cell and conduct of programmes.
- p. Purchase of Plagiarism-check software.
- q. Campus-Community-Connect Programmes.
- r. *REYONO* journal to be UGC-CARE-listed.
- s. Promote fieldwork and internship.
- t. Incentives for research output.

4. Infrastructure Development and Learning Resources

- a. A research wing with modern lab amenities for science departments and facilities for research in Language, Humanities and Social Sciences.
- b. Upgradation of medicinal garden and zoology museum.
- c. Digital mapping of campus flora.

- d. E-Governance—Meticulous MIS for office automation leading to a paperless system.
- e. Harvesting more solar energy.
- f. A centralised solid waste management system.
- g. The Public Facility Lab to be made functional.
- h. Language lab to be made functional.
- i. Construction of men's hostel and staff quarters.
- j. State-of-the-art recording studio.
- k. Butterfly garden, orchid garden, plant nursery, kitchen garden, and aviary.
- l. Fully-automated library.
- m. Purchase of new books and e-books to the library every year with the support of management in addition to the annual government fund.
- n. Publication division for the college.
- o. More classrooms and infrastructure for four-year degree courses based on NEP.

5. Student Support

- a. Develop a system for identifying, and fostering the unique capabilities of each student in association with clubs, associations etc.
- b. Intensive coaching for NET/SET/PSC and other competitive examinations.
- c. Start-up initiatives and seed money for it.
- d. IELTS training .
- e. Civil Services Examination Training.
- f. Remedial coaching.
- g. Mentoring system.
- h. ANPU-student welfare programmes.

- i. Life skills and soft skills training.
- j. Seminars and training programmes in association with Alumni.
- k. Registration of alumni association.
- l. Inter-collegiate national level competitions.
- m. More scholarships to financially backward students.
- n. Placement drive every year.
- o. Health centre with facilities to check the health quotient of students with remedial strategies.

6. Governance, Leadership, and Management

- a. Periodical training for teaching and non-teaching staff.
- b. Fully automated office with a better MIS with a digital support team.
- c. ISO certification of the college.
- d. Digitalization of old documents.
- e. Department Quality Assurance Cells.
- f. Participation in SAAC.
- g. Managerial training for the faculty.
- h. A PR cell for the college with proper facility and support staff.

7. Best Practices

Environmental protection and sustainability is the concern of the times. Issues about the environment demands the policy of reuse, recycle and reduce. Programmes are to be formulated considering local advantages and disadvantages.

- a. Women empowerment.
- b. Plastic-free green campus.

- c. Function as an epicentre to study and preserve local folklore and culture.
- d. Proper e-waste management.
- e. Conduct green audit every two years.
- f. Home for the homeless project as part of Anpu.
- g. Promotion of Campus agriculture.

VI. Core Priorities

- a. Refining the Teaching-Learning experience with the emphasis on academic result enhancement.
- b. Infrastructure augmentation to guarantee improved teaching-learning experience, research and administration.
- c. Community-college-connect initiatives.
- d. Research development

VII. Planned programme strategy

1. Refining the Teaching-Learning experience with the emphasis on academic result enhancement

- a. E-content development by the faculty.
- b. Systematic mapping of outcomes, result analysis, and corrective measures like remedial coaching for slow learners and programmes for advanced learners.
- c. Faculty development programmes.
- d. Mentoring to be done meticulously with proper monitoring
- e. Expand ANPU project to extend a helping hand to students in need. Home for the homeless student.
- f. Soft skill and life skill enhancement programmes for students and staff.
- g. Encourage faculty and student participation in workshops, seminars and other academic venture.

- h. Expand linkages with major academic and research institutions and industries.
- i. Placement drives for students.

2. Infrastructure augmentation to guarantee improved teaching-learning experience, research, and administration

- a. Ensure MIS for smooth and proper administration and documentation.
- b. Equip research departments with necessary amenities.
- c. Each Department to be provided with state-of-the-art facilities.
- d. Smart classrooms for all Departments.
- e. Wifi connectivity in all classrooms.
- f. E-content development centre.

3. Community-college connect initiatives

- a. Expand Aardram project to the local communities in collaboration with the panchayat and kudumbasree.
- b. Establishment of a community centre for the women and children of the neighbouring colonies.
- c. Each Department has to do community service associating with Aardram.
- d. General extension programmes coordinated by NSS/ NCC/SCM/MTSA/Women Cell/ Other clubs and forums.
- e. Adoption of neighbouring schools for knowledge transfer.
- f. Saptathi project of the institution.

4. Research Development

- a. Create seed money for research assistance and innovations.
- b. A Research Fellowship may be introduced.
- c. At least two patents to be achieved in the next five years.

- d. Common research and instrumentation centre.
- e. Best research paper award to promote research publication.

CONCLUSION

Modern-day education system while facing challenges offers opportunities as well. Higher Educational Institutions are expected to function as multidisciplinary centres incorporating conceptual understanding, creativity, critical thinking, communication skills, and a holistic approach into every stream of education. The implementation of blended education demands the teaching community and the conventional institutions to reorient themselves to understand the opportunities and challenges happening in the world of knowledge dissemination. The institution needs to function as a finishing school besides its role as a centre for imparting syllabus-based information. A new spectrum of quality learning, research, and community engagement has to be followed. Integrated courses and new generation courses demand more investments.

The next three years will be crucial to the institution to implement new initiatives which will be beneficial to the academic community and the society. The Management, faculty, and all other stakeholders are to assess themselves to understand and exploit the opportunities of the new education system. With its indomitable determination to utilise and enhance its potentials for the fulfilment of goals, St Thomas College is scaling towards newer heights of excellence.