

Section I: *Preface*

INTRODUCTION :

Amravati University was established in 1983 primarily as an affiliating University with 67 affiliating colleges and only two Teaching Departments. At present it has 236 undergraduate and postgraduate affiliated colleges besides 21 postgraduate Teaching Departments. Major expansion has been made during the last decade of the past century when the University received UGC recognition in 1990. The affiliating function of the University with such a large number of institutions imparting undergraduate and postgraduate education in general stream as well as in professional segments under 10 faculties, where it is required to conduct around 350 examinations covering a student population of approximately 1.32 lakh in a time bound schedule must be strenuous for the administration. The University's own programmes of teaching, research and extension activities are therefore intricately connected and co-related with those of the colleges. The mission, the vision and aims and objectives of the university as stated at the outset of the Self Study Report (Vol. I) are not only lofty, but quite broad and exhaustive. To live upto the expectation of what has been laid down is a formidable challenge for any institution. Along with knowledge and skill developments which would enable the students to earn their livelihood, they are supposed to imbibe and inherit true nationalism in a country like ours where social, economic, linguistic, religious, cultural and technological diversities are immense. In this scenario, the University has enunciated its objectives elaborately taking these aspects beside science, engineering, medicine and technology and it is auspicious desire that such dreams may come true.

The Vidarbha has been known for its rich cultural heritage and traditions since the dawn of civilization. The famous epic Mahabharata also quotes the names "Vidarbha" and "Indrapuri" i.e. the present day "Amravati". The western Vidarbha region is famous for its agrarian wealth and rich cotton producing soil. Government of Maharashtra enacted Amravati University Act, and established Amravati University on 1st May, 1983. This University geographically covers the Western Vidarbha belt i.e. five districts - Amravati, Akola, Yavatmal, Buldhana and Washim. The University has 470.43 acres picturesque campus. In short span of 19 years, it has contributed in many ways to the economic, social and cultural uplift of the society by offering higher education with the motto "Education for Salvation of Soul". The University was recognized by the UGC under- Section - 12(B) of the UGC Act in 1990.

In its effort for self- awareness, the University has volunteered to be assessed and accredited by NAAC, and has submitted the Self-Assessment Report to the National Agency. Accordingly, NAAC constituted its Peer Team consisting of the Chairman Dr. A.M. Pathan, former Vice-Chancellor of Karnatak University, Dharward; Dr. S.P. Malhotra, Professor, Dept of Education, Kurukshetra University, Haryana; Professor K. Patnaik, P.G. Dept. of Physics (Rtd.), Utkal University, Vani Vihar, Bhubaneshwar; Dr. Gulshan Rai Kataria, Professor and Head, Dept. of English, Panjabi University, Patiala as members. Dr. Geeta lyengar, Academic Consultant, NAAC, co-ordinated and assisted the Peer Team during the visit.

The Peer Team visited the University from 5 to August 8, 2002, and held discussions with the Vice-Chancellor, Registrar, Members of Management Council and representatives of Principals, teachers, students and employees. They also visited various Departments, Central facilities like Library, Computer Centre, University Instrumentation Centre and Health Centre, etc. Analysis of the data compiled in the

Self-Study Report submitted by the University was the base on which the Peer Team formulated its opinions through extensive discussions.

Section II : *Criterion wise Analysis*

CRITERION-I : *Curricular Aspects :*

Amravati University has made rapid progress by introducing a good number of courses in twenty one of its Teaching Departments covering eight faculties of Arts, Commerce, Law, Education, Science, Social Science, Home Science and Engineering & Technology, during the last two decades of its existence. All these courses are serviced at the post graduate and research level leading to Master's and Ph.D. Degree except that of a B.Tech. programme and a couple of P.G. Diploma Courses, Most of these courses are in the professional segment and are need based. The rest are Conventional. One program i.e. of Biotechnology belongs to the emerging area. At the master's level, in most of the departments there is choice of study available both as elective and specialization keeping in mind the requirement of trained and skilled manpower in those subjects. Practicals, dissertations, project works and field studies form integral part of the syllabus wherever these are necessary with varying proportion of marks, The curricula are generally reviewed and updated every three years and the University follows the guide lines of the UGC / other regulatory bodies in this respect. The University Act empowers the Boards of Study (BOS) consisting of teachers from affiliated colleges, university departments and experts (about 20%) from outside the university jurisdiction to modify the syllabi suo moto or on the express directions either from the Academic Council (AC) or the Management Council (MC). The process of introducing a new course generally takes about one

year. Following the national guide lines issued by the UGC the syllabi of all subjects have been unitized so as to give equal weightage to all topics in a paper. Efforts have been made to modify the courses as far as practicable to enhance the potentialities of students for job market.

Large number of courses have been available to students of affiliated colleges for their under graduate programmes. Vocational courses have been introduced in under graduate programme in the affiliated colleges taking into account the regional needs and to infuse self employment capabilities among the educated youth, Although there is some semblance of interdisciplinary approach, it is yet to materialize in its true sense where students of one department, may take up few units (papers) in sister departments depending on the necessities and suitability of subjects without impairing the basic value of their degree. On the whole the curricula framed and implemented by the University are in conformity with the goals and objectives set forth.

CRITERION-II : *Teaching Learning & 'Evaluation*

Students are admitted into the professional streams through Common Entrance Test conducted by the State Government or by the University. Admissions to the other postgraduate Courses are on the basis of merit. The number of working days and teaching days are 250 and 180 respectively, which are in conformity with the UGC guidelines. Teaching and Learning are carried out mostly through classroom activities and by other methods such as project work, seminars, field and study tours etc. The system of departmental library for immediate use of students and faculty members is prevalent in some departments; while others depend on the central

library which remains open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Besides books and periodicals, internet facilities are also available to students and teachers.

Evaluation of students academic performance is being carried out according to a set of statutory rules and Central Assessment System prescribed by Maharashtra University Act, 1994. Question papers are set as per UGC guide lines having short and long answer components and these questions are duly moderated by a board as prescribed in the Act. There is provision of re-totaling but not of re-valuation. The performance of the students is fairly good in many departments, moderate in some others and quite poor in a few departments. Examination works has been computerized and the examination schedule including the publications of results, is strictly followed. As a result there is no backlog. A substantial part of teaching is carried out by part time teachers (called contributory teachers) as there are few permanent faculty members in many departments. It is a matter of concern that even the sanctioned strength has not been filled up.

Permanent faculty members have been selected in accordance with the provisions of the Act. Many of them are highly qualified and known for their research work. The University has been liberal in permitting the faculty members to attend workshops, seminars at national and international levels to keep abreast of the latest development in their subjects. Junior teachers are encouraged to attend refresher / orientation courses besides participating in conferences and workshops.

Formal assessment of teachers is carried out every year. Every teacher gives the detail of work done by him in all spheres of activity such as teaching, research, extension, administration, etc, which are reviewed by the Heads of the Departments and then finally by the Vice-Chancellor. But assessment of teachers by the students is yet to be formalised although informal feedbacks are always available.

CRITERION III : *Research Consultancy And Extension*

Overall achievement in research is moderate. Except the departments like Physics, Chemistry, Biotechnology, Business Management, Geology, Chemical Technology and Home Science, contribution to research through publications in International Journals is limited. Though aforesaid departments have published their researches in many international journals of repute, the research activity has not been on the rise during recent years. Only a few departments have been promoting research at Ph.D. level. That is why during the last five years the university has awarded Ph.D. degree only to few students. Most of the departments are still not having qualified research supervisors though infrastructure support for research seems to be adequate in most of the departments. Availability of Internet, Computer Centre, Botanical Garden, Tissue Culture Lab etc. is a positive step for promoting research in different departments. In spite of the fact that FDP and JRF schemes exist in the University, there are only two regular JRFs working in the University. With respect to awards and recognition for research not many individuals have been successful. Though potential for generating financial support from various national and international agencies exists, it has not been fully utilized. It is perhaps because of this reason that no department has been able to earn Special Assistance of the UGC for their efforts in teaching and research.

Freedom to publish in academic forum is high, and the University provides financial support and has promoted the culture of attending and organizing seminars and symposia. In some departments regional studies have been undertaken though they are not strong enough in comparative analysis.

There are ten ongoing research projects in different departments. The funding for these research projects generally comes from the agencies like the UGC, DST, CSIR, State Govt. etc. Another good feature for promoting research has been roping in some of the philanthropists. In the course of last five years the projects involving an outlay of Rs. 42.12 lac have been completed. The university is publishing quarterly journal of its own wherein the faculty and affiliated colleges publish their research papers.

Consultancy, by and large, is still underdeveloped, as is the case in most of the Universities. However, university has been able to identify the areas of Consultancy. Some departments like Chemical Technology and Computers have provided Consultancy to certain bodies. Still the exercise seems to be at the take off stage requiring sustained efforts from the faculty to generate funds.

Faculty participation and awareness programmes too are at a moderate level. Resources to conduct extension services need augmentation. Though some extension work is being undertaken at Legal Aid Centre for Women and other such Centres established by the University, there is scope for innovation and diversification in the thrust area. There appears to be great scope for undertaking extension work in several disciplines.

Research and extension activities, though substantial are not fully consistent with the infrastructural facilities developed or developing over the years in the University.

CRITERION IV : *Infrastructure And Learning Resources*

The University has good infrastructure facilities. Some of the departments have computers and other scientific equipments. Facilities in Physical Education

Department are quite good and the students seem enthused with the work they are doing. It is because the sports persons are being extended various incentives for their good performance in the games and sports. This is reflected in the performance of students in various games and sports meets. Some Arjuna Awardees are the alumni of this University.

The hostel facility though inadequate is available for students. This facility needs to be developed further.

The library facility is quite adequate. It is supported by Computer and Internet facility, etc. One good feature is that the library staff is being provided training to update their knowledge and application of different software being used in providing good library facilities. The computerization of information about books is not adequate in many parameters and is also less user friendly.

The University has developed many welfare schemes for students, teachers and other workers. Provisions for loans are quite good. There is a health Centre on the campus. But much needs to be done for providing good health facilities to the employees and the students in the health centre.

As for grievances redressal mechanism, there has been Grievances Redressal Committee specially created under the provisions of the University. One of the good features of the University is that it has created departmental examination for the promotion of the employees.

The University needs to develop a data Centre for providing information on various aspects such as research activities and grant support, and for using and monitoring them more efficiently. In brief, the existing infrastructure needs to be utilized more efficiently by the teachers and students in the University.

The university has recently completed construction of Audio-Visual Theatre. This is a useful addition to the developing infrastructure of the university.

CRITERION V : *Students -Progression*

The university runs a good number of job oriented courses on the campus. In spite of the fact that these courses are skill based and suited to market needs, not many students from outside the Maharashtra State have been attracted. Reasons like inadequate number of teaching staff and equipment can be attributed to it. Another obvious reason is that these courses are run in the affiliated colleges of the university. However, good teaching facilities in the university keeps the pass percentage of university students quite high and the drop out rate much low.

It goes to the credit of the university that University Prospectus is regularly updated and printed. The admission to various courses is made by following the reservation policy of the State/Central Government.

Financial assistance is provided to the students pursuing different courses. Various scholarships and other material benefits are given to the students. Since the fee structure is not high, the university has not explored the area of loans from the Banks or other such agencies.

There is a guidance bureau on the university campus but it is not of much help in placement of the students. Even the Management Department of the university has not been able to promote placement services. The university needs to address itself to this urgent requirement in a priority basis.

The hostel facilities are not adequate for the students. The university construction wing has been engaged in construction of more hostels for boys and girls

with the financial aid from State/Central Government agencies for backward class students.

CRITERION VI : *Organisation and Management.*

All the policy making powers are vested with the various authorities of the university such as Senate, Management Council, Academic Council and Board of University and College Development, etc. in accordance with the provisions of Maharashtra Universities Act, 1994 (M.U.Act). The Vice-Chancellor is the chief Executive and is assisted in his day to day functioning by the Registrar, Controller of Examinations, Finance & Accounts Officer and others. Academic calendar has been regularly prepared and notified quite ahead of the session, in accordance with the Statute and the guidelines of the UGC. The employees and officers are deputed to UGC, AIU and other State and National level institutions for advance administrative training.

The Annual Reports are regularly brought out and submitted to the Senate. A substantial part of administrative work has been computerized. On the whole, the administrative work is quite stream lined and is being carried out efficiently.

The university has framed rules notified through Ordinances for taking up the cases of irregularities committed by the employees and awarding adequate punishments to those for their wrong doings.

The university has implemented reservation policy in favour of various types of backward class candidates in matters of admission, employment and promotion, thus following the rules of State Government.

Major sources of finance are the grants of the State Government, fees collected from students as also grants received from the UGC under plan and outside the plan areas. The annual accounts are audited by internal auditors and subsequently by the audit party of the Auditor General. It was observed that the norms of financial transactions are quite satisfactory and there is not much of irregularity pointed out by the audit agencies. Very recently the university has established a corpus fund which is being generated through donations by the employees, students and others. This accumulated amount so far stand around Rs. 10.00 lac approximately. .

The university has adopted the central evaluation system called "Central Assessment System" (CAS) for all the examinations of university departments as well as affiliated colleges. The university is using the Intelligent Character Reader (ICR) system to good advantage. The examination work is substantially computerized and results are published within a stipulated period as per the university Act. Although revaluation is not allowed, retotalling is permitted. It is a good practice that Xeroxed copies of the answer scripts are supplied to the aggrieved candidates on payment of a nominal fees, so that they can know their weaknesses.

The Grievance Redressal Mechanism exists to look after the grievances of teachers, the employees of the university as also the affiliated colleges.

CRITERION VII : *Healthy Practices*

Some of the healthy practices observed by the Peer Team are as follows :-

- The University established in response to the needs of the Society of South-East Maharashtra (Vidarbha Region) offers job oriented courses and has so far used all its resources for providing courses of study which could get the students' employment in future.

- It has tried to establish national / international linkages for teaching and research. These have been of considerable assistance to the University in enhancing its capabilities and image.
- The University maintains healthy liaison with its 236 affiliated colleges spread over Amravati, Akola, Yavatmal, Buldhana and Washim districts and shares their academic concerns through regular periodical meetings.
- The University has fixed a calendar for holding meetings of various bodies so as to leave no room either for anxiety or manipulation.
- The University has evolved a scheme of financial incentive to outstanding employees and faculty members who outshine others in a particular year. It is a satisfying to note that even a Peon or a Farras has been recognized through an award for useful services rendered to the university.
- In addition, the University has evolved a system of graded incentives to outstanding students in terms of marks in the examination, who represent the university, state or country in games, NCC or NSS. Such incentive are bound to help the students concentrate on their game or their chosen extra curricular activities.
- The 'Ashwamedh Interuniversity Sports Tournaments' is another healthy practice in the university. The sport event involves the students both in financing and organising and helpful in developing the leadership and management skills in the students.

- In addition, the Vice-Chancellor who is a keen sportsman himself encourages sports competitions between teaching and non-teaching employees of the university. He particularly patronises cricket and volleyball which generates a spirit of healthy competition among the employees.
- The University awards minor project to university faculty members. This practice is likely to encourage researchers to fulfill their initial needs of coping with funds at the stage of inception and prepares them to apply for larger grants from the funding agencies.
- The University is known for declaring results of the examinations on time and ensuring transparency so as to avoid sense of frustration to the examinees.
- The university campus has a 470.43 acres of land. The campus is kept green throughout the year. A reservoir has been constructed to irrigate those areas for maintaining greenery on the campus.
- There is healthy coordination among the faculty members the non-teaching employees, the students and the administration resulting in a tension free academic atmosphere.
- It is laudable to observe that the finance wing of the university has been functioning with a few audit objections pending against-the university.
- Science department have stepped to cultivate scientific temper among rural school students with activities like 'Gram Janhit Vidyan Manch'.

- Inspite of the fact that there are 236 colleges affiliated to the university and more than one lac students sit in various university examinations, the unfair means cases are very few.
- The university organizes meetings of Principals / Managements of the colleges with the Vice-Chancellor on a regular basis.
- The university has developed Local Area Network (LAN) and is progressing towards developing the Wide Area Network (WAN).
- The university has constructed Shikshan Bhavan and Karmachari Bhavan for the benefits of its teaching and non-teaching employees.
- The university has recently completed Academic and Administrative Audit (first round) as per UGC guidelines and in this way has shown promptness in submitting itself to audit inspection. Further the guidelines have been formulated for affiliated colleges for the same,
- The Alumni Association has begun to function in the university and the university is likely to reap the benefit of this association in the times to come.
- There is an Employees' Credit Co-operative Society with a corpus about one crore. In case of an employees' death or superannuation, a sum of Rs.25,000/- is disbursed ex-gratia out of this fund.
- The university has won State (three) and National (one) level award for best NSS and Environmental Awareness activity each for the university.

Section III : Overall Analysis

On the basis of the thorough analysis of the Self Study Report, visits to various academic and physical units, discussions with the Vice-Chancellor, Registrar, Members of Management Council, Faculty Members, Students, Principal of affiliated colleges and other members of the University, the Peer Team has been impressed by the growth and progress of the University in several aspects notably on the quality of teachings research and socially oriented activities.

The Peer Team would like to appreciate some of the features of University's approach in maintaining quality and standard of academic programmes and at the same time it wishes to bring to the attention of the university some of the concerns for its consideration. The Peer Team would like to commend the University for the following :

- Limited but useful wide ranging academic programmes covering traditional and emerging areas, like Bio Technology.
- Introduction of interdisciplinary and career oriented courses
- Excellent efforts made by the University in developing the corpus fund.
- Special coaching classes for students appearing for NET/SET Examinations.
- Establishment of linkage with IGNOU, in Distance Education Programme.
- Uplift of village conditions through NSS .

- Though limited, the university has got few linkages with National and International Universities and Institutions.

While appreciating the University is efforts for assuring quality and standard in its educational program, the Peer Team has the following suggestions for the consideration of the University.

- Recruitment of adequate teaching staff.
- Efforts to be made to get funding from various national/internal agencies for research and development to build infrastructure.
- Efforts to be made to attract more students from other states and neighbouring countries.
- Entrance test for all job oriented and innovative courses be introduced.
- University should maintain records of the success of its students in various central service examination/NET/SET, etc.
- Starting of self financing courses for creating avenues to increase its funds from other than government sources.
- The central Library be digitised by seeking funds from various agencies.
- The University may consider giving more autonomy to deserving University Departments as also introduction of semesterization and choice based credit system.
- To have a perspective plan for the long-term development of the University and also have a University level Planning and Monitoring Board with eminent Academics.
- Create a mechanism for giving adequate thrust on image building and marketing of the University programmes and thereby improving -its visibility nationally and globally.

- Efforts be made to establish the Chairs of excellence in multidisciplinary subjects.
- Teaching and research facility be encouraged to take up UGC sponsored research projects. UGC programmes like SAP, DRS, COSIST.

The Self-Study and Self Analysis Reports of the University are neatly brought out. The clear-cut SWOT analysis of Amravati University given at the end of Vol. IV speaks about the vision of the university. In a nutshell the university has made a sincere efforts to present the above said report in the required format. The members of the steering committee deserve the appreciation of the Peer Team.

The Peer Team would like to take this opportunity to express its appreciation of the University's progressive outlook as also its overall ambience of peace and prosperity that permeates the entire University environment. The Peer Team also acknowledges the leadership qualities of Dr. S.N. Patil, Vice-Chancellor of the University. The Team will also like to record its deep appreciation of all the sections of the University community and the dynamic coordinating committee members.

Sd/-
(Dr.A.M/Pathan)
Chairman

Sd/-
(Dr.S.P.Malhotra)
Member,

Sd/-
(Dr.K.Patnaik)
Member

Sd/-
(Dr.Gulshan Rai Kataria)
Member

Sd/-
(Dr.S.N.Patil)
Vice-Chancellor

