

**DRAFT REPORT OF THE
PEER TEAM
ON**

**RE-ACCREDITATION
OF**

**MARIS STELLA COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS),
VIJAYAWADA, ANDHRA PRADESH**



NAAC
NATIONAL ASSESSMENT AND
ACCREDITATION COUNCIL

BANGALORE

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ACCREDITATION OF MARIS STELLA COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS),
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Section I: Preamble

Maris Stella College (Autonomous), Vijayawada, A.P., is a Catholic Christian Minority Institution of Higher Education for Women, founded in the year 1962 under the Franciscan Sisters of Mary. This is situated in the district of Krishna of Andhra Pradesh. It is affiliated to Acharya Nagarjuna University and is recognized by University Grants Commission under section 2f of the UGC Act from 19th January 1963. The institution was conferred Autonomous Status by the University in May 2003 for undergraduate programs.

The mission of the college is to mould women into intellectually competent and spiritually inspired women with a wholesome personality. With this mission in mind the college offers both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in addition to Job oriented Diploma and short term certificate courses.

The college had its first cycle of Assessment and Accreditation by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council, Bangalore in September 1999. After completion of five years of assessment the college approached NAAC to be re-assessed and re-accredited and submitted its Re-accreditation Report. In the RAR the college has highlighted the major steps taken to sustain and enhance its quality of education and how it has fulfilled the observations of the peer team that visited in 1999. Accordingly the NAAC constituted a peer team to visit and validate the claims of the institution and recommended re-accreditation. The peer team consisted of:

- Dr.M.Chandramani, Former Vice Chancellor, Avinashilingam Deemed University, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu – Chairperson.
- Smt. Bandana Chatterji, Former Principal, Sri Shikshayatan College, Kolkata, West Bengal – Member.

- Prof. P.G.Khot, Professor and Head, Department of Statistics, Nagpur University, Nagpur, Maharashtra – Member.
- Mr. B.S.Madhukar, Deputy Adviser, NAAC, Bangalore – Co-ordinator.
- Dr. N.Srilakshmi, CEO & Director, National Institute of Small Scale Industries & Training, Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh – Observer from industry.

The team visited the college from 14th to 16th March 2006, interacted with the Management Committee, Principal, IQAC, faculty, students, parents and alumni; visited various departments, library, hostel and other facilities in the campus. Based on the above exercise and keeping in mind the criteria identified by NAAC for the process of re-accreditation, the peer team is pleased to give its objective re-assessment of the college in the following paragraphs.

Section II: Criterion wise Analysis

Criterion – I (Curricular Aspects)

The vision of Maris Stella College of an integral and personalized education for creating morally, socially, and spiritually committed women and educating first generation learners is programmed into specific goals and objectives. This comprises promoting national development through social responsibility and citizenship roles, enhancement of academic quality and research on global standards, value orientation, community awareness and ecological preservation. The college, consciously disseminates its objectives to the students and other units, through orientation classes, prayer services, college prospectus, notice board clippings, teaching and students co-curricular activities. To achieve these goals the college admits first generation learners from fringe areas of the city; to promote academic quality with career orientation, inter disciplinary and multi disciplinary programmes, encouragement of extra curricular activities, soft skills, and value based education have been emphasized.

As a multi faculty (BA/BSC/BCOM) UG college, affiliated to Acharya Nagarjuna University, it also offers five PG courses. In the UG course a choice of five B.Sc. Elective combination groups or programmes is

available, with five in B.A.- one taught both in English and Telugu (History/Economics/Political Science) and two in B.Com. Besides these electives (Part II) there is compulsory English, a choice of Indian language between Telugu/Hindi/Sanskrit, Indian Heritage and Culture and Science and Civilisation. Part III of study includes Inter Disciplinary Electives, Value Education and Extra Curricular activities. Aware of creating employment opportunities, the institution has two UGC sponsored vocational courses, which is Tax Procedures and Practices in B.Com. and Tourism and Travel Management in B.A.; besides there are four other self financed programmes; one in B.A., three in B.Sc. Among the five PG courses introduced, English and Economics in M.A., Maths in M.Sc.(2003), M.Com.(2003), and MBA(2004) are self financed. Whereas the UG curriculum is autonomous, the PG courses are not; it has to follow Acharya Nagarjuna University syllabus.

Even at the time of first accreditation in 1999, the college had been aware of need for curriculum development; but the grant of autonomy in 2003 had made it possible to take initiatives for incorporating goals into a need based curriculum design. The programmes are constantly reviewed at the Quality Circle meetings of IQAC and relevant modifications made. Curriculum review either in the form of new courses or changes in syllabi is systematically initiated by the faculty, assessing student needs and goals of basic value orientation. Following UGC guidelines, the departmental proposals are discussed in the Board of Studies and finally ratified by the Academic Council. Most of the departments have revised their syllabus and introduced new courses. English department has introduced general and current English, Writing Skills etc.; Economics made an addition with Money, Banking, Public Finance etc; Commerce included Advertising and VAT; Botany introduced Applied Biotechnology; the Social Work syllabus is enriched with addition of Women and Development, Problem of Children, Youth and the Aged and Social Problems.

A commendable aspect of curriculum restructuring is the introduction of nineteen Inter Disciplinary Electives (IDE), which provides applicable knowledge of a related aspect of a subject; examples are Botany with Applied Horticulture, Chemistry with Food and Nutrition, Social Work with

Psychology; students must take two IDE electives to complete three parts of UG course requirement; the twelve self financed (except Sanskrit) certificate courses enhances the students job prospects; five new certificate courses have started in 2005.

The introduction of a curriculum in which besides chosen electives, learning of languages, culture, inter disciplinary approach, value education and co-curricular activities (NCC/NSS) are integrated in a semester system needs to be appreciated; the learning of computer, soft skills and social responsibility provides the necessary frame work.

The choice of programme options are the elective options in BA/BSC/BCOM, some language option and choice of IDE and certificate courses. The choice based credit system is to be implemented soon. There is flexibility to change from one programme to another after admission but the time frame is limited by University rules.

Feed back from students, alumni and academic peers is used for syllabus revision.

Despite the commendable aspect of an integrated curriculum development, consideration can be given to further diversification of core elective options, particularly in expanding Biological Sciences, introducing Sociology and Mass Communication.

Criterion – II: Teaching and Learning & Evaluation

Admission to general and vocational courses is on merit. For the MBA course it is centralized and regulated by state government. For SC/ST/BC it observes the quota stipulated by the state government. As a Christian Minority Institution, preference is given to Christian students. The college follows a government fee structure; special counselling is provided for sports persons. The demand ratio of applications is 1.7:1.2 for PG courses and 7:4 for UG courses.

Interviews are held at the time of admission to assess students aptitude and capability for particular programmes. Departmental course teachers also

conduct oral & written tests. The English department takes a placement test for classifying girls into A & B groups. Two Bridge courses are given in Functional and Spoken English primarily for students from vernacular medium; for slow learners 11 remedial classes are held and bi-lingual teaching is adopted. An inbuilt tutorial system helps to rectify weaknesses. Advanced learners are assigned challenging tests in the Internal assessment (CA) and peer enrichment programmes.

The number of teaching days in the last academic year was 189; with the adoption of semester system, each semester is of 90 working days ending with a Semester End Examination (SEE). Teaching patterns adopted, besides the lecture method, are guest lectures, film projections, quiz, seminars, group discussion, book reviews, creative writing and role plays; the emphasis is on an interactive approach to make teaching learning participatory. The component of lecture method & other teaching methods varies from course to course; Maths and Statistics has 70% of interactive teaching; Science & Social work have 50–50%, Humanities depend mainly on lecture method, while MBA relies 75% on interaction. Tourism & Travel Management and Tax Procedures and Practices uses on the job training, Social Work uses field work, mini projects etc. The Economics department has introduced 'Earn while you learn' scheme which is a good initiative. Many departments particularly PG invites and utilizes the services of guest lectures. This may also be extended to UG courses particularly in the final year on a broad based manner.

A tutor ward system is followed; each teacher is allotted 25 students; the teacher in-charge is a mentor and counselor; is responsible for attendance of their ward; arranges for remedial teaching and interacts with the Deans, Vice Principal, Parents as required.

The total number of teachers is 96, including 1 part time teacher. In spite of 72 sanctioned posts, 49 teachers are in govt. sanctioned permanent positions and 47 (46 full and 1 part time) are appointed by management in temporary position; 11 teachers are from outside the State, the teacher student ratio is 17:1 in UG and 13:1 in PG. Recruitment of teachers is done by a selection committee as per norms of Minority Institution applicable in the state.

Selection is on the basis of interview and class demonstration; eighteen teachers have been appointed last year.

Eleven of the teachers have Ph.D and 38% have M. Phil; 7% are UGC/NET/SLET qualified. Five teachers, including the Principal, have won award for excellence in teaching, 19% of teachers were Resource persons in seminars and 62% participated.

For the evaluation of research & teaching, the college follows a multi evaluation process; there is evaluation by management, by students on course/programme evaluation and effectiveness of teaching and self appraisal by teachers. New teachers are evaluated at the end of the year.

Evaluation of learning takes place in a systematic manner; internally through Slip test, Continuous Assessment (CA) and Semester End Exam. (SEE). The CA's which has 2 components carries 40% and SEE 60%, students are kept well informed through Academic Calendar, orientation in the 1st semester and detailed orientation in the 1st week. A grievance redressal cell considers grievances with regard to exams.

Reforms undertaken by the college with regard to evaluation is a major step after attaining autonomy. The single examination system at the end of the year has been replaced by an integrated system, in which besides CA's & SEE, the Inter Disciplinary courses, Value Education & Co-curricular activities are also evaluated; also each student in the final year has to do a Mini Project of 50 marks on any one elective subject. Also the double evaluation system with internal and external examiners, coding of scripts, gives credence to the system. Results are announced on time. It can be noted that the NAAC's first assessment has motivated the college to adopt new teaching and evaluation techniques. The teaching learning process can be further strengthened with the use of audio visual aids like OHP, Power Point presentations by all departments; the use of computer and other electronic media in teaching is recommended.

Criterion – III Research, Consultancy and Extension

In the last 5 years, research activity has expanded in the college. A Research Cell provides relevant information and maintains a record of institutional research. The college has established 3 Research Centres; one for English, another for Economics, both being sanctioned by the University. A Women Study Cell with a faculty member as Research Director has been established in 2004 and is awaiting UGC's approval.

The management encourages research by providing special facilities such as research journal, typing facilities and arrangement in time schedule. The budget allotted is Rs. 4 lacs for research. A Research Foundation has been established which provides an incentive of Rs.5000/- to the part-time Ph.D. scholars; six teachers have received the award; student research is initiated through the research projects done by final year UG and PG students.

There are 11 faculty members with Ph.D. and 39 with M.Phil; 19 are doing Ph.D. and 15 are completing their M.Phil; 6 Ph.D's have been awarded in 2004-05. There are 5 on-going UGC minor projects during the last 5 years, 4 teachers have availed of the UGC FIP program. The Dept. of Social work has undertaken collaborative research with the University of Sydney, Australia; two faculty members in the Dept. of English supervise M.Phil thesis. The faculty has published 4 books, 7 articles (in edited books) 9 research papers, 15 abstracts, 25 papers in national journals. A large number of teachers have presented papers in national and international seminars. A note worthy aspect of the college is the presentation of papers by students in national seminars and publication of their articles in journals.

Some faculty members, particularly from the Department of Social Work provide consultancy service. Expertise provided by the departments of Telugu, Sanskrit and Commerce for voluntary agencies is noteworthy.

The extension activities of the college are well structured. It is organized under the College Community Network Centre, and functions through 4 basic units—the NSS, NCC, Women Cell and the Forum for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC). The coordinators of the 4 units organizes and co-ordinates the total extension activities. The JPIC works through

various cells, (of staff & students), such as Health, Adult Literacy, Street and Working Children to facilitate its outreach programme. The noteworthy feature of the extension activities of the college is that it is integrated with the academic curriculum; it is mandatory for students to choose any one extension activity in the IInd & IVth semester and grades are allotted; also orientation classes, field trips are arranged for generating awareness among students.

The varied extension activities of the college are done either independently by NSS / NCC or in collaboration with NGO / GO's. It includes village adoption by NSS, health camps relief work, working with street children; the college collaborates with 14 NGO/GO's; it works with SKCV Girls Centre and other organizations for under privileged children. The department of Social Work is involved in projects for creating awareness. The 100 or more projects, of the college in the last 5 years have established the college – neighbourhood network and effected positive changes; a mid day meal programme in Payakapuram has reduced school drop outs. The extension activities of the college is laudable.

Besides the 14 NGO/GO's the college has established linkages with various organizations for research and training purposes. Dept. of Economics works with the National Institute of Rural Development; on the job training to students of Tourism Department is provided by ITDC, APTDC, TTC etc; Department of Commerce has linkages with CA firms.

The College has acted upon the recommendations of the 1st NAAC Report (1999) in expanding research activity and offering consultancy services.

Criterion – IV Infrastructure and Learning Resources

The college with a sprawling campus area of 20 acres, has separate blocks for UG, PG, MBA, Administration, Library, Hostel and staff residence. There are spacious well ventilated class rooms, 7 laboratories for the science departments, 2 Botanical Gardens and a herbarium; it also has, 2 AC conference halls, 2 seminar halls, 2 audio visual centres with a CD library, multi media, AC internet centre with 21 system, examination and valuation centre, sports centre, college community network centre for extension

activities, and open air and indoor auditorium, cultural centre etc.; the Vice Principals, Deans and Departmental Staff rooms, library, office, canteen are connected by Inter-com facility, a public address system is used for announcements. Augmentation and expansion of the campus is undertaken by the Governing Body as and when necessary. In the last 5 years extension has taken place in the administrative block for the examination centre, the construction of PG Block, PG Library, Research Centre has been established; UG library has been renovated; a virtual classroom has been added, new laboratory equipment, 3 LCD projector, about 71 systems have been added.

Optimum utilization of the infrastructure takes place; certificate courses and co-curricular activities are held after classes are over at 3.15 p.m. The campus is utilized by external agencies, for meetings, conferences, training programme of Banks, which provides additional resource to the college.

The library has witnessed major improvements in the last 5 years. A new PG library with 2 floors have been constructed, a separate Reference section in the UG library has been added. It has now a carpet area of 15,508 Sq. Ft. besides the departmental libraries. The library is automated. It is open for 300 days. The ratio of student to books is 1:4. Open access has been introduced. There is a multi media centre; 21 computers with internet facility is accessible to students free of cost; a system with internet is also available to physically challenged students.

The college has a hostel with 149 rooms for 400 students. The hostel provides necessary facilities with a study room, medical room and recreational facilities. Besides the hostel the college has an infirmary, a fitness centre, student centre, an instrumentation centre for sciences. A playground and an indoor games room partially meets the need for outdoor and indoor games of the students; the basketball court has been recently cemented.

It is evident that the college has taken definite initiatives to improve its infrastructural facilities since the last assessment; an Instrumentation Centre has been established; computer and other facilities have been expanded in

the library, open access has been provided. The large well maintained campus, with its gardens and trees provide a peaceful ambience for teaching/learning.

Criterion – V Student Support & Progression

The total number of students in the current year for the UG and PG courses is 1491, with 1192 in UG and 299 in PG courses; there are 75 and 4 students from outside the state in UG and PG respectively. The students represent diverse socio economic background; in 2004 – 05 nearly 40% were from SC/ST/BC and economically disadvantaged groups.

The success rate in examination in the last five years is about 87% in UG whereas in PG in the last 2 years is 100%. But the drop out rate seems to be rather high; for the last two batches in UG it is 15% and 9%; in PG it is 25% and 17%. In terms of progression to employment and higher studies; in the last 3 years, on the basis of available information between 15 – 22% were employed, nearly 60% went for higher studies and in 2004 – 05, 16 appeared for competitive examination.

The institution displays a sensitivity to students needs and attempts to provide the required support services : It ranges from provision of midday meal to “earn while you learn” programme. Financial support is provided through freeship, Government scholarship, institutional scholarship and fee concessions. All necessary information needed by the students is available in the prospectus. The institution caters to the needs of visually or physically challenged students, by arranging ground floor classes and special facilities in the library.

Among other support services, there is a Student Counseling Centre, established in 2003, and provision for counseling by a teacher counselor is available; academic and personal counseling by course teacher and tutors is also provided. A Placement Cell came into existence in 2001 with 5 faculty members. Recently the MBA has also established a placement cell for their students. The institution also has a Women Cell which deals with women's problems and their empowerment, staff or student. There are two Grievance Redressal Cells comprising representative from management, faculty and

students. It redresses grievances regarding examination, routine etc. A Rotaract unit is part of the college from 2005.

The Alumni Association has been in existence from 1970. It is motivated to provide financial support to needy students. The college Alumni includes well established and successful women in public life, legal, medical profession, social work and entrepreneurs. The Alumni Association, institution interface need further strengthening.

The college has acted upon the recommendation of the 1st NAAC Report with regard to the Placement Cell, Grievance Redressal Cell; cultural exchange has been facilitated with Rotaract programmes; physical activity has been made part of Co-curricular activity. But there is still scope for better organization of career counseling and placement for students.

Criterion – VI Organization and Management

The Principal, as the Academic Director is the Head of the institution and is the executive authority; she plans & executes the academic programme and informs the managing Committee. She also supervises over the teaching and non-teaching staff; in general overall responsibility of the college is vested in her. The implementation of the goals of the college is done by the Director and the IQAC which functions at three levels; the core group consisting of the Principal, Vice-Principal and 5 Faculty Members meets once in 2 months. The IQAC is making efforts in sustaining and enhancing the quality in academic and administrative spheres.

The organization and management of the college is done through 4 main bodies; The Governing Body determines the fees and ratifies the resolutions of the Academic Council; the Academic Council, is responsible for all academic matters; The Board of Studies of each Department revises the Syllabus and the Finance Committee deals with financial management. The organization structure is decentralized, with 20 committees having well defined functions.

Perspective planning for the college is done by the General Body of the society which functions as the Management Committee, the Provincial of the

Society is the President, the Correspondent, the Vice President and the Principal is the Secretary. During the last 5 years, perspective planning included autonomy, new courses and expansion of infrastructure; autonomy was initiated in 1999 and implemented in 2003; proposal for new courses were planned in 2002 and implemented in 2003-04; expansion of infrastructure was planned in 1999/2000 and has continued till 2005.

The recruitment of new teachers is based on workload. A selection committee selects the teachers as per procedure. For non-teaching sanctioned posts, recruitment is as per government norms, for unsanctioned posts, the college management recruits and appoints. The ratio of teaching to non-teaching is 2:1.

Performance appraisal is carried out through self appraisal by teachers and students feed back. Non-teaching staff performance is evaluated by the Principal. Professional development programmes for teachers, administrative, library staff are encouraged by the college, through computer learning, workshop on emotional intelligence for teaching and non-teaching etc. Each non-teaching staff is assigned well-defined roles to enable efficiency in their work

There is frequent interaction between the Principal, teachers and administrative staff on quality enhancement in the college.

The fee structure for self funded courses is decided according to the particular course. Additional resources are raised through donations, sponsorships and alumni association. The resources mobilized in the last five years is Rs.6,19,911.

Audit of the regular aided programmes are carried out by the concerned departments of the state and central governments. The funds raised under the self financing courses are audited by chartered accountants appointed by the Governing Body. No major objections has been raised in the audit reports. The fund utilization is appreciable. The college maintains systematically the financial transactions which is evident from the income and expenditure for the year 2004-05. The college received Rs.1,95,85,626

as Grant-in-aid Rs.10,87,700 as fee, Rs.4,89,011 as donation, Rs.45,22,335 from self funded courses during last year. The college needs to be appreciated that it has utilized Rs.10,06,385 during the last five years on welfare schemes for the academic community..

The administrative organization of the college is well structured with effective participation of all units.

Criterion- VII: Healthy Practices

The mission of the college for imparting a holistic and integrated education to empower girls and first generation learners has evolved through certain Healthy Practices. The following healthy practices in the context of working of the institution can be noted

- Providing educational opportunities to first generation learners.
- Planned integration of co-curricular activities with academic curriculum.
- A value based approach to education.
- Sensitizing students to community awareness and problems of the less privileged.
- Spreading women's awareness through women cell, departmental activities of women empowerment etc.
- Providing mid day meals to needy students.
- Practice of 'Earn while you learn' system.
- Using the second component of CA by course teachers of testing students initiative and imagination.
- Practice of tutor ward system with tutors as mentors.
- A transparent open interactive process between student, teachers and non-teaching staff.

Section III: Overall Analysis

Maris Stella College founded in 1962 under the direction of Franciscan Sisters of Mary aims at providing quality education to women who would emerge as wholesome personalities. The attainment of autonomous status in the year 2003 paved the way for sustaining and enhancing the quality of education in terms of the core values identified by NAAC namely contributing to national development, fostering global competencies among

- The introduction of IDE's, integration of value education and co-curricular activities into the common curriculum.
- The adoption of double evaluation system.
- Student involvement and participation in extension activities through the four units under the college community network center is commendable.
- Good infrastructural facilities and its upkeep.
- Objective of providing higher education to women from the marginal groups

Recommendations

The following recommendations by the peer team for consideration may promote further enhancement of the quality of the institution.

- Develop short term and long term plans for the institution.
- Recruit specialized teachers to deal with IDE and other new courses.
- The college can consider introducing new courses such as Bio-Chemistry, Bio-Technology, Micro Biology, Food and Nutrition, Mass Communication etc.
- Courses in Communication Skills in English and Entrepreneurship Development may also be introduced to increase the employability and self employment potential.
- Coaching for entrance examinations like CAT, GMAT, IAS etc. can be taught of if it is viable.
- May explore the ways of bringing down the dropout rates.
- Efforts may be made to get major and minor research projects from UGC and project support from other funding agencies also.
- Strengthen the consultancy services.
- Teachers may become members in professional associations.
- On-the-job training should be provided by furthering linkages and signing MOUs with industries.
- Initiate further involvement with the alumni in holding workshops and specialized training for the students.
- Faculty training programmes on aspects of quality improvement.
- Consultative decision making with regard to student issues eg. attendance, shift system, timing of supplementary exams etc.
- Easy access to computer and campus wide internet connectivity.

- Strengthening of career counseling and placement services.
- Greater Interdepartmental research activity.
- Encouraging student interactions in the cultural life of the college.

The peer team is appreciative of the great service the institution is rendering to the society through providing quality education to women students. It hopes that the college would emerge as a center of excellence in the field of higher education. The team extends its best wishes to the institution in all its future endeavours.

Signatures of the Peer Team

Chandramani
16.3.06

Dr.M.Chandramani, Chairperson

Bandana Chatterji

Smt. Bandana Chatterji, Member

P.G.Khot
16/3/6

Prof. P.G.Khot, Member

*I have read and
agree with the report*

Thresiamma

Signature of the Principal

(Dr.Sr.M.I.Thresiamma)

