



NALSAR University of Law
Hyderabad

7.2.1 - Describe two best practices successfully implemented by the Institution as per NAAC format provided in the Manual.

FIRST BEST PRACTICE

1. Title of the Practice: Concern for other species

2. Objectives of the Practice:

The next frontier of social justice is the rights of nature and animal rights. As the world grapples with global conflicts and anthropogenic crises, NALSAR acknowledges the urgent need to expand the circle of justice to include all species we share our campus and planet with. Recognizing all living beings as stakeholders in legal and policy discourse is no longer merely an ethical or moral aspiration—it is what will make a sustainable and just future possible.

NALSAR views this as an opportunity to advance interdisciplinary research and social reform while nurturing young leaders who champion interspecies equity and advocate for systemic change. With law as an instrument of social change as its core tenet, NALSAR is home to vital conversations on justice since its inception. We believe it is critical to foster a thriving academic environment where these principles of interspecies equity are respected and incubated through thought leadership and cutting-edge research.

In order to achieve the above goals ALC housed at NALSAR has adopted an evidence based approach rooted in direct involvement of students in drafting policies that matter to them. Human-animal conflict on campus is used as a teaching moment to have meaningful conversations on the ethics of representation, something that lawyers grapple with at all times in their career. The idea is to start small, focus on the problem before looking for solutions, consult a range of stakeholders and then finally work at drafting a policy/law. The focus is on learning by doing and to make the point of not rushing into solutions before the problem is understood in all its complications. The fact that it took two whole years to gather evidence and draft a animals on campus policy and another two years to scale it up at the macro level is a lesson in patience for young lawyers.

3. The Context:

The contextual features and challenging issues when embodying this practice involved two key aspects.

First, mitigating human-animal conflict on campus was critical to ensure safety and well-being for all people inhabiting the space. Balancing the rights of

humans and animals required sensitive, equitable solutions that considered both physical and mental harm to individuals while promoting coexistence on a shared campus.

Second, it was imperative to be conscious and mindful of the historical context of India's socio-economic marginalization of castes and communities of which the use of animals was an integral part. It was important to not undermine the years of revolutionary struggle and set us back on progress made over decades even as we acknowledge that the deeply entrenched biases and systemic privileges we are fighting will take more generations to overcome. This required a nuanced approach to work towards a more inclusive framework for change that is respectful of the past and evolving vision for the future.

4. **The Practice:**

The practices that were adopted included first-of-its-kind initiatives of establishing a legal clinic and a research centre at the University to integrate the principles of interspecies equity into academia and practice. These were aimed at facilitating intellectual dialogue as well as giving a flavor of real-world implementation of animal law. Through the experiential learning of the working of animal law, students learn to mix their ethical standpoints in a systematic manner into policy making, impacting the lives of all species.

The Animal Law Centre and the Animal Law Clinic were developed in consultation with and support from collaborators from leading civil society organizations such as **Humane Society International/India, Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy**, and **People for Animals Public Policy Foundation, Fish Welfare Initiative**, along with international partner universities like **Harvard Law School (US), Tel Aviv University (Israel)**, Lewis and Clark Law School and the **University of Barcelona (Spain)**. This global collaboration underscored the interdisciplinary and international nature of the initiatives, making them unique within the Indian higher education context.

Despite an ambitious vision, several constraints were faced. The progress made in the first few years with a broad range of impactful activities included conducting sensitization workshops and capacity-building programs for government officials, including four State Judicial Authorities, and hosting a National Teachers Training Program with an international animal law expert. The achievements also included offering credit courses at three leading Indian law universities and launching India's first postgraduate program on Animal Protection Laws, a milestone in promoting animal law education. However, the **COVID-19 pandemic and lockdowns** significantly impacted fieldwork, limiting direct engagement with stakeholders and communities.

Facing challenges head-on, the Centre turned adversity into opportunity by recognizing the growing interest among animal advocates to upskill or transition into value-aligned careers. In response, the Centre launched India's first Master's program in Animal Protection Laws, which saw enrollment from over 150 individuals across the country, with participation extending to Africa, Europe, and Southeast Asia. This program became a significant milestone,

providing a comprehensive platform for advocates to deepen their knowledge and build impactful careers. Notably, several alumni have since secured high-impact roles at prominent nonprofits across the US, Singapore, and the EU, further amplifying the program's global impact.

At the Colloquium on Care, Contentment, and Cooperation organized by Professor Emerita Amita Dhanda, which convened distinguished leaders from the political and academic realms, the vision of a future rooted in justice for all species was delivered upon. The Centre's work contributed to bringing animals in the sphere of justice to their attention, and for the first time, the conference included animals in the ambit of justice for all.

By positioning animal justice as an integral component of equitable governance, the Centre has not only reshaped academic and policy frameworks but also inspired a paradigm shift in how justice is perceived and implemented. These efforts signify a transformative step toward interspecies equity and collective well-being.

5. Evidence of Success:

While the lockdown hindered the pace of progress, these consistent efforts marked a transformative step in Indian higher education, demonstrating how academic institutions can play a pivotal role. The pandemic provided an impetus to collaborate with the Harvard Animal Law and Policy Program on their global report on policy responses to zoonotic disease outbreak and co-author the India report with inputs from a diverse range of scientists and experts.

The students at the clinic provided assistance to practitioners such as implementing the Animal Birth Control Rules in New Delhi, conducting earlystage research on opportunities for cage-free egg production in India which contributed in a small way to the development of a program launched in India last year. Closer home, the efforts of students in were fruitful in developing a campus policy for coexistence aimed at mitigating conflict with wild and community animals and upholding the laws of India pertaining to the relocation of these animals. Once we felt confident with the process of drafting and implementing a policy for animals in the microcosm of our university, we expanded our scope to major cities in India to understand the attitude of people towards animals in community living. In furtherance of the expansion of our scope, we are currently surveying people from resident welfare association in the selected cities.

The centre recently signed an Memorandum of Understanding with the Animal Welfare Board of India to conduct training workshops. Supported by an endowment, PhD scholarships will be offered to bring more credible data and breakthroughs in animal law and policy.

6. **Problems Encountered and Resources Required:**

During the lockdown, movement and travel restrictions led to the scaling down or pausing of several activities. Additionally, limited funding constrained the scale and quality of work, affecting the Centre's ability to expand its programs and hire dedicated staff for sustained operations.

7. **Notes (Optional):**

The acknowledgement and involvement of ethical standpoints, moral consideration, emotions and individual opinions of students in law and policy making in a systematic and channelized fashion requires a sustained and long-term view of things. Challenging technocracy and impractical objectivity is quintessential to the learning and enforcement of laws and this may be done by working with students on the craft of trusting one's intuition and learning to get rid of self-doubt on issues that needs powerful conviction for any effort to introduce social change. Teaching the law needs a formal acknowledgement of subjectivity inherent in the discipline and it also involves teaching students not to be ashamed of it. In that, it is a process of learning to mediate intersubjectivity in the experience of dealing with the same piece of law and understanding the process of "becoming" while being the intermediary.

SECOND BEST PRACTICE

1. Title of the Practice – NALSAR Faculty Incentive Scheme

2. Objectives of the Practice:

The objective of the incentive scheme is to encourage faculty members to pursue research activities and publish their research work in quality journals.

3. The Context:

To facilitate a thriving research culture, NALSAR introduced a faculty incentive scheme in the year 2018.

4. The Practice:

NALSAR has been incentivizing quality research publications of faculty members since 2018. As per the scheme, faculty members whose work is published in Scopus indexed journals and books published by leading international publishers can claim monetary incentives. The scheme has a clear gradation based on the reputation and citation of the respective scholarly sources. The incentive amount varies from twenty-five thousand to two lakhs. This scheme also has the provision for periodic grants to buy books and also claim reimbursement for participation in recognized academic conferences. As recognition of their research work faculty are also awarded with the certificate of Excellence in Research during the University's annual convocation. Further the teachers are also encouraged to complete their Doctoral degrees by giving them a non-teaching semester.

5. Evidence of Success:

Since the introduction of the faculty incentive scheme, there has been an increase in the number of research publications in Scopus indexed journals and books published by leading international publishers. Specifically, it has been observed that a total of 18 faculty research incentive claims were made in the year 2023 versus 2 publications in the year 2017. Further, the number of faculty members availing the incentive for research publications has been going up since the year 2018 stands as a testament to the success of the scheme.

6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required:

University has to make budget provisions for the scheme apart from the other mandatory expenditure of the University.