

REPORT ON INSTITUTIONAL ACCREDITATION OF

**NALBARI COMMERCE COLLEGE
NALBARI, ASSAM**

**Visit Dates
August 25-26, 2004**



**NATIONAL ASSESSMENT AND ACCREDITATION COUNCIL
Bangalore**

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Report of the Peer-Team on Institutional Accreditation of Nalbari Commerce College Nalbari, Assam

Section I : Introduction

Nalbari Commerce College, established in 1979, is located in village *Japarkuchi* about 1 km from Nalbari town (headquarter of Nalbari district) and about 70 km from Gauhati. It was affiliated to Gauhati University in 1985 but not yet recognised by UGC under 2f and 12B. The college campus has an area of 1.3 acres of land. It is the only commerce college in the erstwhile North Kamrup district of the state comprising North Kamrup, Nalbari and Barpeta districts of today and continues to be the only Commerce College in Nalbari district. The college is co-educational.

The motto of the college is "let us acquire knowledge to enlighten our minds". Besides providing higher education and training in commerce, the mission of the college also include empowering students for employment or self-employment.

The college runs 2 courses : the 3-year B.Com. course, both Major (Honours) and General, and a 2-year Higher Secondary course in commerce. There are 4 Departments in the college : Accountancy, Management, Finance(Banking) and a General Department comprising English, Assamese, Hindi, Economics, Statistics, Mathematics and Information Technology (IT). 'Major' courses are available in Finance (Banking), Management and Accountancy. The college has no self-financing courses. The present student strength of the college is 196 of which 25 are girl students. The drop-out rate in UG course is 36.7% on average for the last three batches of students. The area being an insurgency afflicted one; there are occasional unrest and turmoil. As a result, non-Assamese students have a tendency for leaving their study or leaving for other colleges outside Nalbari. Things are however, steadily improving since late 2003. There is no entrance test and admission is made only on the basis of records of previous examination passed.

The average success rate in the final degree examination during the last seven years is about 72%. The college has introduced special classes for the final year degree students after their test examination.

There are 14 permanent teachers including 1 female teacher, and 3 part-time teachers. There are 10 non-teaching staff including one in a non-sanctioned post.

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Following govt. order, the monthly tuition fee for the degree course has been doubled to Rs. 60/- for General and Rs. 70/- for Major courses from 2003. All other college fees are reasonably low and also lower than those in the neighbouring colleges. The unit cost of education at the degree level in Rs. 1712/- per year without salary component and Rs. 22,956/- with salary.

The central facility in the college include a library with 3228 books, some sports facilities and a canteen.

The college has 278 working days and an average of 182 teaching days. There are no research project and no collaboration with outside agencies. Resources generated by the college in 2003-04 was Rs 7.05 lakh.

The college in its 25th year of performance as offered itself for assessment and accreditation by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) and submitted the Self-Study Report (SSR) to NAAC prepared by a Co-ordination Committee formed for this purpose. A Peer-Team was constituted by NAAC, Bangalore, to visit the college and validate the SSR. The Peer-Team consisted of Prof. Biranchi N. Puhan, Vice-Chancellor, North-Orissa University as the Chairman, Professor Alok K. Bhaumik, Professor of Economics and Dean, Faculty of Arts, Rabindra Bharati University, Kolkata as the Member-Coordinator and Professor C. Lalkima of the Department of Public Administration, Mizoram University as Member.

The Peer-Team visited the Nalbari Commerce College on August 25 and 26, 2004 and carefully studied, analysed and discussed the Self-Study Report submitted by the college. It visited all the academic departments, administrative sections and all the central facilities in the college. The Peer-Team interacted at length with the Principal, Governing Body members, faculty, students, non-teaching staff, parents and alumni of the college. The Peer-Team also had gone through various relevant documents like the Prospectus, Acts & Statutes, rules and regulations, budget, audit reports etc. Based on the above exercise and keeping in mind the criteria and norms set by NAAC, the Peer-Team prepared this draft-report on institutional accreditation of the college and also arrived at provisional accreditation status.

The assessment of the college under various criteria, the commendable features as well as the issues of concern and some suggestions are reported below.

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Section II : Criterion -Wise Analysis

Criterion I : Curricular Aspects

Besides providing higher education and training in commerce and allied areas, the professed mission of the college also includes empowerment of students for employment and self -employment. However, for various extraneous and internal factors, this goal and mission of the college remains largely unattended.

The college offers the 3-year B. Com. course of Gauhati University in both general (Pass) and Major (Honours) streams. Honours courses are offered in 3 streams (i) Accountancy (ii) Business Organisation and Management, and (iii) Finance (Banking). Besides, there is a 2-year Higher Secondary Course in commerce as per the syllabus and regulations of the Assam Higher Secondary Education Council. Being an affiliated college, there is no scope for revision of syllabus by the college.

As for the curricular aspect, the greatest area of weakness had been the absence, for long years of any course of a vocational or professional nature in a commerce college with declared objective of promotion of employment / self-employment opportunities for students. However, the college has very recently introduced of self financing certificate courses : a 6 month course in Bamboo and Cane Craft and a 3 month course in Spoken English.

The college is planning to introduce a Diploma course in Management Education and vocational courses in trades like Sericulture, Pisciculture, Floriculture and Carpentry etc. Some more areas in which the college could introduce self-financing certificate / diploma courses include Secretarial and Office Practices, Office Automation, Computer Fundamentals, Travel and Tourism Management, Export Import Management and Entrepreneurship and Sales Management. At the degree level the college could go for the BBA course in future.

Criterion II : Teaching -Learning and Evaluation

Students are admitted in the college on the basis of records of previous examination passed. There is no provision for any entrance test for any course, honours or pass. There are no bridge / remedial courses for the educationally disadvantaged students. However, from 2004 an attempt has been made to provide a 15 day special coaching for such students after their test examination. Advanced learners are provided necessary guidance for better results including personal counselling "provided they come forward voluntarily and possess high ambition" (SSR, p.14). The initiatives for both

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the student groups appear not to have been institutionalised to any meaningful extent.

For sometime now, the teachers have been preparing teaching plans according to the prescribed proforma supplied by the college. Such plans include the number of classes to be taken, chapters, topics to be taught etc. Except some occasional group-discussions in the class-room, there are no regular and systematic arrangements for supplementing lecture-method of teaching by other learner-centred teaching methods, e.g. field-work, projects, other assignments etc. No audio-visual and other teaching aids are used in the class rooms.

The number of teaching days in the college is 182 in a year. The number of working days of the college is 278 in a year.

The Commerce Faculty comprising Accountancy, Management & Finance (Banking) departments organised one Workshop in August, 2004. No faculty development programme has been organised in the college so far. During the last 2 years, only 4 teachers have participated in national / international level seminars. 12 teachers have participated in Refresher and Orientation courses so far.

Teachers are recruited by the college itself following UGC norms and as per rules framed by the Department of Higher Education of the state government. One healthy practice introduced by the college recently is a formalised system in which the current and outgoing students have to fill in 2 separate feedback questionnaires relating to performance of individual teachers and also different aspects of campus experience. The names of students are not disclosed in such questionnaires. The Peer-Team, however, feels that the procedure followed in such opinion-surveys needs to be changed. To avoid biased and stereotyped answers, such exercises should be conducted in a supervised and controlled class -room situation.

The college has also introduced annual Self-Appraisal reports for individual teachers.

Criterion - III : Research, Consultancy and Extension

Out of 14 permanent teachers, only 1 has Ph.D degree. However, 3 more permanent teachers are now registered for Ph. D. No teacher could take up any Minor Research Project so far largely because the college is not yet UGC recognized one. There is also no provision for any seed-money from college fund to encourage teachers in research work. No teacher has ever provided any consultancy services.

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5 teachers in the departments of Management & Finance (Banking) and also in English, Hindi and Economics have published 14 books during the last 8 years.

One teacher has been given some additional charge of looking after the extension activities of the college. Such extension activities carried out during last few years are in the areas of health and hygiene awareness camps, medical camps and adult education. Students have also participated in such programmes organised by outside agencies. The Peer-Team feels that the college being located in a rural area in the outskirts of the town, there are scopes for more extension activities in collaboration with the Local *Gram Panchayat* and some NGOs. Such activities could include useful socio-economic surveys of the neighbouring villages, training in the formation and working of Self Help Groups (SHG), dissemination of information and procedures of different official schemes for rural poverty alleviation and some kind of counselling and support service for marginalized and vulnerable families in the neighbouring villages. The girl students of the college could play a crucial role in this particular area of the activity.

Considering the performance of the college under this criterion, the Peer-Team endorses the view expressed by the college itself in the SSR that "The college is far behind in case of recognising research, consultancy and extension activities as a culture" (SSR, p.87).

Criterion IV : Infrastructure and Learning Resources

The college has a campus area of 1.3 acres of land and a total built up area of approximately 12000 sq. ft. This includes one community hall, two Assam-type buildings and one single-storied RCC building (1763 sq. ft.). Besides, there is one cycle stand, *one chali* shade and one small dwelling unit for the night guard. There is no hostel, residential accommodation for the Principal, teachers or staff and no playground. The college is in the process of acquiring an adjoining plot of govt. land of more than 1 bigha for construction of a boys hostel.

One commendable aspect on the infrastructural front has been the construction of a part of the new building by funds contributed by the teachers of the college. This large room with half-partition areas, houses the HOD and other teachers of the four major departments.

There is a central library with 3228 books and 2 periodicals on subscription. 315 books have been added to the central library during the last 2 years. The college library does not have book-bank facility. There is no reprographic

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facility in the library. The library has one computer with software for computerization of library services. The work of computerization of library catalogue has been completed by now. The four academic departments have departmental libraries each having a small collection of books. There is 1 computer each in the departments of Accountancy, Banking and Management. 5 other Pass subject departments have 1 computer for common use. Internet facility has recently been installed in the college. The same needs to be made available to students and teachers without delay.

The college does not have any significant sports infrastructure. However, it has some sports equipments for volleyball, cricket, table tennis, football, Javelin, shot-put etc. Though the College does not have its own playground, it utilizes the nearby Nalbari College playground for different outdoor games and annual sports event.

There is no medical unit/centre in the college. There is, however, an arrangement with a local doctor who provides medical treatment to members of the college community on an honorary basis.

Criterion V : Student Support and Progression

The percentage of students appearing for the final examinations after the minimum period of study is little less than 49%, the drop-out rate being about 37% in the UG course. Enrolment as noted above, has also fallen drastically over the last decade or more. There has however been some improvement in enrolment in 2004-05 session. All this is a matter of great concern for the college. The insurgency problem since the later half of the nineties and 'unimaginative govt. policy of encouraging growth of junior colleges and higher secondary schools, imparting Arts education only (SSR, p.ii), have been cited as reasons behind the declining trend in enrolment in UG classes in commerce colleges. However, the Peer-Team feels that there may be other reasons at the college level which are also responsible for such an unfortunate scenario in the enrolment and drop-out patterns. The sharp decline in the final degree examination pass percentage (18%) in the last year also calls for sincere heart-searching.

As has been admitted in the SSR (p.88), 'the institution is very poor in keeping records of the progression to PG or other higher courses. So is the case in keeping records of progression to the employment'.

The college publishes its Prospectus annually. The Academic Calendar being published in the Prospectus for few years now, is fairly exhaustive and useful. There is some provision for merit-cum-means scholarship from the college fund besides the government scholarships/stipends for the reserved

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category students (SC/ST/OBC). The college has very recently started offering some career guidance services to students under the supervision of a teacher. There are no other worthwhile institutionalized welfare programmes for students, teachers or the staff.

There are two students' common rooms, one each for the boys and the girls. The boys' common room provides indoor game facilities for table-tennis and carom. It has also a music system. The girls' common which is very narrow, needs to be located in a more spacious room in future, as the number of girl students increase.

✓ One great problem, as mentioned by many students, is the absence of any bus service between the town and the college. The college being located in an outlying area, the students, particularly the girls face great difficulties in their journey to the college and back home. This is also one of the reasons why most students skip the afternoon classes. The Peer-Team members during the exclusive discussion with the President of the G.B., referred to this problem and were happy to have been assured by him that he would immediately take up the issue with the district administration and the problem will be solved soon.

An Alumni Association was formed in the first ever Alumni Meet in November 2003. The Association is already playing a very constructive role in many aspects of college development. Some alumni have been instrumental in the formation and functioning of the 'Council for Expansion of Commerce Education' (CECE) promoted by the college. However, during the meeting with alumni and guardians, the Peer-Team felt that many of them are keenly interested to play a constructive role in the development of the college in various ways. The records of the Alumni Meet show that out of about 90 ex-students who attended the meeting, 33.7% are employed, 63.5% are self-employed, 1.4% have gone for higher studies and 1.4% are unemployed. Quite a few of the ex-students are working as state civil servants, tax-consultants, advocates, college lecturers and established businessman.

Criterion VI : Organisation and Management

✓ Nalbari Commerce College is governed by a 11- member Governing Body consisting of the President who happens to be the Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Govt. of Assam, Principal as the Secretary, nominees of the University and the state government, 2 members from the teaching staff and 1 from the non-teaching staff. Besides the Academic Council, there are 6 Sub-Committees to look after Admission, Examination, Library, Election,

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Purchase and Construction. The Academic Council, composed of the Principal and all heads of departments, prepares the Academic Calendar and the Prospectus.

The College has not organised any professional development programme for the non-teaching staff. It is, however stated in the SSR (p.30) that "office assistants are given necessary training from time to time, if and when felt necessary".

The college is not yet a UGC- recognised one under 2f and 12B. As a result, it has not received any UGC Plan-Grant for development purposes. The state government grant of about Rs. 34.76 lakh per year is limited to the salary of sanctioned teaching and non-teaching posts. There had been no development grant from the state government till recently. However, the state govt. has recently sanctioned Rs. 10 lakh for infrastructure development of the college. Besides, more than Rs. 12 lakh is reported to have been sanctioned from the MP LAD fund of Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh. Internal resource generation over the years has been paltry. However, the college has been able to generate a fund of Rs. 7 lakh from a gift coupon draw held in April 2004. As a result of all this, the college budget presents a very sad picture. Only 2.65% of total revenue expenditure (Rs. 36.19 lakh) could be utilised for some essential non-salary components in 2002-03.

In view of the financial position of the college, the Peer-Team feels that there is scope for small upward revision of some of the college fees (excluding tuition fee) e.g. admission fee, enrolment fee, library fee, registration fee and students' mutual aid fund. There is also scope for mobilising funds from other sources, e.g. self-financing courses, Alumni Association etc.

A formal Grievance Redressal Cell headed by the Principal has been constituted in the college only recently. The same is, however, yet to be institutionalised through clear cut rules and procedures for operation. In all fitness of things, the Principal should not have been the chairman of such a Cell.

There is a Students' Union in the college which is 'nominated' by the students and supervised by a teacher. Its activities are mainly confined to organizing sports and games competitions and cultural events. There is also a Teachers' Council which looks after the interests and welfare of teachers.

One important constraint for the development of the college has been the absence of a permanent Principal for about 8 years now. Prior to that the Principal in position for more than 12 years is reported to have taken no initiative either for UGC recognition or for the development of the college in

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any significant way (SSR, p.85). The college is being run by a teacher-in-charge Principal after the previous Principal was suspended in 1997, on charges of alleged misuse of funds. The absence of a permanent Principal has also stood in the way of approaching the UGC for recognition. However, the post of the Principal has finally been advertised recently and the President of the GB who happens to be a Cabinet Minister of the State Govt. has assured the Peer-Team members that the same would be filled up as early as possible.

Criterion VII : Healthy Practices

There are a few healthy practices developed and practised by the college in areas of curricular, co-curricular/extra-curricular and organisation & management. Regular Unit Test and Preparatory Examinations are held for students. The college has no twinning programme or student-exchange programme. On request from the college, the District Industries Centre, Nalbari organised one training programme for students of the college under the PMRY Scheme in April 2004. The college has no national or international linkages for training or research, non-formal modes and distance education programme. No significant steps had been taken for value-based education and all-round personality development of students or their community-orientation.

However, some of the healthy practices recently introduced by the college are :

1. Introduction of 2 skill-based vocational courses and plans to introduce more in the coming years.
2. Teaching plans prepared by teachers.
3. Feedback from students on campus experience and performance of teachers.
4. Self-Appraisal by teachers.
5. Preparation of systematic Departmental Profiles by all academic departments.
6. Installation of Internet facility and partial computerization of library services.
7. Career guidance to students through a Career-Guidance Cell.

8. Current initiatives for greater resource mobilization.
9. Regular publication of Prospectus, Annual Reports, College Magazine and two Wall Magazines in a year.
10. Publication of separate academic journals by each of the four departments.
11. Active role played by the 'Council for Expansion of Commerce Education' (CECE) promoted by the college.

Section III : Overall Analysis

Nalbari Commerce College has been the only college of its kind for undergraduate studies in commerce and management not only in the district of Nalbari but within a radius of about 100 km around. Started in 1979 with high enrolment rates in some initial years, it has gradually lost its glory and became a victim of stagnation and decay over the years. Every institution has its own historicity and is endowed with some favourable as well as constraining factors. Nalbari Commerce College, inspite of having quite a few initial growth factors, failed to capitalize on the same in subsequent years largely because of certain unfortunate developments in its organization and management some of which have been indicated above. Fortunately however, things have started changing for the better since late 2003. Some such favourable changes have been in areas of student enrolment, improving quality of students being enrolled, concrete move in the appointment of a permanent Principal and the renewed enthusiasm and zeal on the part of the teacher-in-charge Principal and the teachers for turning the college around.

The Peer-Team members during their interaction with the students, were highly impressed by their vibrating enthusiasm, mental alertness, commitment and also their love and identification with the college. Quite a sizable number of the students, specially almost all the girl students had their schooling in English medium schools of repute. Such a student population, the Peer-team sincerely felt, needs to be supported by appropriate opportunities, environment and support services, - at least a reasonably minimum threshold of the same.

The Peer-Team after detailed review of present and prospective status of the college and also the needed introspection, is happy to arrive at the perception that the college has every reason to surge ahead in the years to come and regain its glory within a few years only. In a spirit of helping the college to move in this direction, the Peer-Team puts forward some suggestions in

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addition to ones mentioned under different criteria, for consideration and action by the college.

1. The process of appointment of a permanent Principal should be made as early as possible. The selection, in all fitness of things, must be on the basis of merit only with emphasis upon leadership and motivation qualities, integrity and past records.
2. Every effort should be taken without delay, to acquire UGC recognition under 2f and 12B. UGC being the only major source of development grants for institutions of higher learning, this will considerably help the college achieve its goals.
3. More self-financing vocational courses, as suggested under Criterion: I above should be introduced in a phased and time-bound manner.
4. Teachers need to be oriented in research activities more seriously. It is very essential to motivate and imbibe them in such activities including some aspects of research methodology, through some workshops at the college level with the assistance of appropriate resource persons.
5. More seminars, extension lectures etc. specially by those in the fields of business, commerce, banking and entrepreneurship development should be organized to give the students the needed exposure.
6. There should be more emphasis upon innovative co-curricular and extracurricular activities by students.
7. More use of audio-visual modes should be introduced in class-room teaching.
8. The office work including accounts and record-keeping should be computerized with a time-bound programme. Admission procedures and the day-to-day interaction of students with the college office should be made more student/friendly.
9. There should be more emphasis upon extension work in the neighbouring areas, as suggested in Criterion III above.
10. Some articulate and experienced individuals in the locality including imaginative and enthusiastic sympathizers from some neighbouring colleges should be inducted as invitee members in some appropriate college committees.
11. There should be regular meetings with groups of guardians following a pre-circulated schedule for the same.

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The present exercise of NAAC accreditation has surely been a rewarding experience for the college community and a challenging opportunity for introspection and further improvements. It can also be hoped that the college community will not fall into any post-accreditation complacency.

The Peer-Team sincerely thanks the Principal, the Co-ordinator, all teachers, non-teaching staff and students for their help, co-operation and warmth displayed during the visit.

The Peer-Team wishes the college all success in making it a premier institution for commerce education and also achieving its professed objective of helping the students in employment and self-employment.

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Names and signatures of the Peer-Team Members

1. *Biranchi N. Puhon*
 *Aug 26, 2004*
 Professor Biranchi N. Puhon

Chairman

2. *Alok K. Bhaumik*
 *26.8.04*

Professor Alok K. Bhaumik

Member- Coordinator

3. *C. Lalkima*
 *26.8.04*

Professor C. Lalkima

Member

*I agree with the observations
 and suggestions in the NAAC
 peer team Report.*

Nalbari, Assam

26th August, 2004

Ajoy Chandra Baruah
26/8/04

Ajoy Chandra Baruah

Principal

Nalbari Commerce College

Principal I/O *Ajoy -*
Nalbari Commerce College
Nalbari, Assam

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राष्ट्रीय मूल्यांकन एवं प्रत्यायन परिषद

विश्वविद्यालय अनुदान आयोग का स्वायत्त संस्थान

NATIONAL ASSESSMENT AND ACCREDITATION COUNCIL

An Autonomous Institution of the University Grants Commission

Certificate of Accreditation

*The Executive Committee of the
National Assessment and Accreditation Council
on the recommendation of the duly appointed*

*Peer Team is pleased to declare the
Nalbari Commerce College*

Chowkbazar, Dist. Nalbari, affiliated to Gauhati University, Assam as

Accredited

at the C⁺ level.

Date : September 16, 2004



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Director*

- This certification is valid for a period of Five years with effect from September 16, 2004
- An institutional score (%) in the range of 55-60 denotes C grade, 60-65-C⁺ grade, 65-70-C⁺⁺ grade, 70-75- B grade, 75-80- B⁺ grade, 80-85-B⁺⁺ grade, 85-90- A grade, 90-95-A⁺ grade, 95-100-A⁺⁺ grade (upper limits exclusive)

Quality Profile

Name of the Institution : Nalbari Commerce College
Place : Chowkbazar, Dist. Nalbari, Assam

Criterion	Criterion Score (Ci)	Weightage (Wi)	Criterion X Weightage (Ci x Wi)
I. Curricular Aspects	60	10	600
II. Teaching-learning and Evaluation	65	40	2600
III. Research, Consultancy and Extension	55	05	275
IV. Infrastructure and Learning Resources	65	15	975
V. Student Support and Progression	60	10	600
VI. Organisation and Management	65	10	650
VII. Healthy Practices	60	10	600
		100	$\Sigma C_i W_i = 6300$

$$\text{Institutional Score} = \frac{\Sigma C_i W_i}{\Sigma W_i} = \frac{6300}{100} = 63.00$$

Head
Director