

NAAC AQAR 2023-24

INSTITUTIONAL BEST PRACTICES 2023-24

Title of the Practice

Efficient and Transparent Elective Course Allocation System

Objectives of the Practice

The primary objective of this practice is to enhance the elective course selection experience for students by automating and bringing transparency to the elective course allocation process. It aims to improve match-making between a student's preference and electives offered through a customised efficient, fair, and insightful bidding process.

The Context

National Law School of India University (NLSIU) is India's first public law university, consistently ranked as the top law school in the country. With around 1000 students enrolled in various programmes, including the pioneering 5-year integrated B.A. LL.B (Hons.) programme, NLSIU sought to improve the elective course selection process. Previously using a First Come First Serve (FCFS) model, the University decided to switch to an Open Elective Bidding Process. A platform was adopted to automate this process. The University follows a bidding system consistent with practices adopted by several top-ranking universities, both within India and internationally, aiming to enhance the overall student experience and faculty resource management.

The Practice

The software used for bidding, follows an Open Bidding Process, providing students with real-time insights into the demand for each elective course. Under this system, each student is allocated 200 points per course they wish to register for. Students use these pre-allotted bid points to compete for courses based on their preferences. This transparency allows students to make informed decisions and adjust their bids accordingly.

The bidding process includes multiple rounds:

1. Elective Demand Estimation Round: Provides insights into course demand to assist with timetable preparation and planning.
2. Course Bidding Rounds: Allow students to bid for courses in real-time, adjusting their bids based on real-time insights.
3. Confirmation Rounds: Students confirm their winning courses, with the option to drop courses if needed.
4. Waitlist Generation Round: Students can be placed on a waitlist for oversubscribed courses.

5. Add & Drop Rounds: Students can add or drop courses based on seat availability and programme registration rules.

Before the bidding process, the Academic Administration Department (AAD) uploads student data, course lists, timetables, and sets bid points based on policy. During the process, students validate their login, participate in demand estimation, take note of timetable clashes, and develop bidding strategies through practice rounds.

The platform's design handles high transaction loads, ensuring real-time updates and a seamless experience for users. Post-bidding, students can download reports of their confirmed courses, and the AAD manages administrative tasks through the platform.

Evidence of Success

The introduction of a bidding platform at NLSIU has significantly improved the elective course allocation process. The platform's real-time insights and transparency have resulted in a more efficient and fair system, reducing human errors and manual intervention. Students have reported a better understanding of the bidding process and increased satisfaction with their course selections. The AAD has benefited from automated processes and insightful analytics, enabling better resource allocation and planning. Overall, the bidding platform has successfully enhanced the academic experience for both students and faculty at NLSIU.

Problems Encountered and Resources Required

One of the challenges encountered was ensuring the accuracy of the uploaded data and the smooth functioning of the platform during peak usage times. Technical support and regular system audits were required to maintain the platform's performance and integrity. Additionally, training sessions for both students and administrative staff were necessary to familiarize them with the new system. Continuous monitoring and feedback collection helped in addressing any issues promptly and improving the overall user experience.
