E-Education & Learning Award

Nominations for: WITSA First VIRTUAL Global ICT Excellence Awards
Nominations for: E-Education & Learning Award

Nominee: Daffodil International University
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Bangladesh.

Campus Address:

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Dr. Md. Sabur Khan
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Reasons for Nominations:

The hundred-year-old traditional education systems which we are following now gives us a classroom culture, where we find the teacher is giving class to the students, following the traditional teaching methodology, students listen to the class lecture and usually are not encouraged to ask any question. The class is not that much interactive at all. However, we have success stories here. We have doctors, engineers, leaders, scientists, leaders and they are contributing immensely in different sectors. Though the modern kids are more tech savvy and they are using technology, they are also somehow following the same teaching and learning techniques.

With the advancement in science and technology, we adopted change in everything. Our lifestyle, our culture, way of doing jobs, taste everything has rapidly changed except our Education Systems. We have been successful to change everything around us but when we come to the point that we need to reform the education systems then somehow; we fail to accept the realities or change our mindset here. The recent pandemic situation has brought some changes here. COVID-19 outbreak is now pointing us to accept the reformation which was the talk of the region for years. Particularly in this region we are now in such a state where neither we practice the traditional education systems nor can we bring the modern learning systems. So we are now at a stage to bring the change here.

The Hybrid Education system is in discussion with our policy makers to face the challenges of this pandemic time, ensuring many online and few classroom activities with proper management through technology so that every stakeholder can track properly. For a country
like Bangladesh with a huge population, people have the mindset to complete education anyway in the shortest possible time and join the job. Daffodil International University took a bold decision to shift these traditional classroom practices into a new modern Hybrid Education System and we have identified a huge impact on teaching and Learning systems. Our Proposed model Blended Learning Center at Daffodil International University has addressed the following demand of the time-

- The reformation of education systems of the country
- The use of technology where the world is moving forward
  - To spread the quality education countrywide through the use of technology
- Bring the quality education at the reach of general people
- To keep the education systems uninterrupted during any emergency
- Ensure the involvement of teacher and students with the education systems

Introduction:

As per the University Grants Commission, there are 49 Public and 107 Private universities in Bangladesh. Also, there are three International Universities in the country without any approved center for Cross Border Higher Education that has been listed on UGC Website till now ([http://www.ugc.gov.bd/](http://www.ugc.gov.bd/)). A large number of our population is the young generation, thus the demand for education is high in Bangladesh. Bangladesh has indeed made commendable progress in terms of enrollment in higher education institutions, and it has been predicted that this will continue to grow as the share of the young population with tertiary education is expected to increase from 11% in 2010 to 20% in 2035 (World Bank, 2019). The country does not have available higher Study opportunities as per the demand in public institutions. Therefore, many of the students are moving towards private institutions, though the costs are relatively high and those are centered in urban areas. In addition, though a big part of the youth is graduating each year from the public and private universities, the majority of them are remaining unemployed for the lack of required skills and competencies the industries require from them. On the other hand, there is also a lack of opportunities which results in a rapidly growing unemployment rate every year. Considering these three issues, Daffodil International University started its journey in the year 2002. The primary goals were the following:

- To offer International standard quality education at an affordable reach in comparison to other private institutions in Bangladesh
- To develop a complete digital University and develop ICT proficient Young Graduates from here
- To develop research focused Entrepreneurial University which will work in collaboration with Industry and develop Employable graduates and young entrepreneurs.
- To transform the Teaching and Learning Techniques/methodology of the University as per the demand of the time.

Focusing on the objectives, the university started its operation and gradually developed its services and features concentrating on the demand of the world. Since its establishment, the institution has made an effort to transform the traditional role of education providers into an entrepreneurial university model for the commercialization of knowledge along with working to innovate Teaching and Learning techniques converging on the demand of the Tech-Savvy
Generation Z. The decision has been taken to ensure the active contribution to the national economy. Before we move to the e-learning effort of Daffodil International University, we may discuss in short the general circumstances of Higher Education Institutions of Bangladesh.

Perspective Bangladesh and e-Education:

Bangladesh has a huge young generation and the population of the country is growing so fast. The young generation represents half of our population. Therefore, they have the requirement for quality education. In Bangladesh access to quality education is a major challenge for two reasons. All the facilities are Dhaka Centric and inadequate facilities in terms of demand. However, both the challenges could be addressed by the introducing e-Education platform which is yet under the consideration of the Bangladesh Government. Although the recent COVID-19 situation has brought this agenda before the policy maker strongly. During the month of March all education institutions were declared closed. For not having a National Policy the education institutions faced a huge challenge then. Also the Govt has been planning the perspective of e-Education for a long time. The pandemic situation has sped up the process. Many institutions started different forms of e-education during the time. Though they faced some sort of problems, there were no alternate solutions for keeping the academic activities alive. Some of the institutes couldn't adopt e-Education, they just kept the communication with the students through email and the rest of the institutes are completely closed. In these circumstances, Daffodil International University and the Daffodil Family brought Good news for us. Daffodil International University kept its academic activities uninterrupted from the very first day of the pandemic time. The University is already a complete digital University and the shifting to Hybrid Education System through Blended Learning Center was not at all the toughest job for Daffodil International University. The university has set up a model which has been praised by all leaders, policy makers. We are proposing a Blended Learning Center for the Award and Recognition.

Ref


Daffodil International University (DIU)
[https://daffodilvarsity.edu.bd/]

Daffodil International University (DIU) is the prominent education venture of Daffodil Group and concerns of Daffodil Education Network. Daffodil International University is carrying the group mission and vision in the higher education systems in Bangladesh. Today DIU is a leading private university in Bangladesh moving forward with a vision to impart quality education to produce quality graduates who will be able to stand out among others nationally and globally. The University has already been recognized in independent government assessments as one of the top graded universities in Bangladesh, DIU today combines state-of-the-art facilities and a dynamic approach to teaching and research with its proud heritage of service and achievement.

The prime objective of DIU is to create leaders in the fields of industry and commerce, science and technology, arts, as well as all other disciplines of life. The University has the aim to raise a generation of worthy citizens in order to create a productive workforce to lead our nation out of a vicious cycle of poverty. Moreover, DIU has taken the mammoth responsibility of cultivating, nurturing and mentoring the youth to turn them not only into good and ethical human beings but also into entrepreneurs who will be able to contribute to Gross Domestic Production (GDP) of Bangladesh by generating employment.

DIU has established its stunning permanent campus in Ashulia of Bangladesh covering a wide area of 100+ acres of land which is now fully functional and is gradually moving towards completing its Master Plan that includes many attractive facilities for its students. DIU is also striving to establish itself as a complete Digital University, equipping its students and teachers with the latest technology and providing ICT support. To make its students effective for the global market is the goal of DIU. The entire campus has been developed as a learning zone. Students find the lab, thematic learning atmosphere, thought provoking environment, tools to open their mind.

Daffodil International University has collaborated internationally with 55+ countries. Students from 11 countries around the world are studying here. The university has an academic linkage around 400+ Universities outside Bangladesh.

Core focus of DIU:

- Developing as Complete Digital University
- Quality Teaching & Learning systems
- Developing competent graduates
- Developing Responsible Global Citizens
- Developing Entrepreneur
- Industry-Academia Linkage
- Internationalization of its education systems
- Campus collaboration
The Chronological Digital Transformation Effort of DIU:

*How DIU Transformed the Infrastructure: The Journey from a Red to Green Campus:*

Daffodil International University was set up as a result of a dream of a humble ICT, Education and Social Architect Dr. Md. Sabur Khan. The dream began with a wish to contribute to the economic transformation of the nation through developing Future Leaders with Modern Tech Education. He embarked on his vision using education as the strategic medium and envisioned a fully digitized University with a complete technical ecosystem to achieve his goal.

Due to the context of the dream, it was taken as a very ambitious plan. It was like dreaming to bridge between two opposite worlds. However, the team kept the dream alive. But singular-minded Dr Md. Khan stood strong like a true statesman. The Green Digital Campus implementation plan started integrating the new technologies for setting up digital ecosystems and campus constituents to create the environment. A strong message of commitment and involvement has been shared among the family members to develop the mindset, create the same feeling among them so that the team can believe in the dream, overcome all odds and come out achieving the goal of a green digitized campus.

From day one, DIU concentrated on achieving this vision. DIU took the bold step to make its entire operation automated and ensured the application of Technology/Systems to present a smart tech-savvy future generation, empowered and encouraged them, brought them the tools to innovate and design in new and different ways and ultimately develop them to lead the country complying with global standards. DIU started developing the people’s mindset and gradually developed the resources.

The Digitization effort started from the city Campus area. Then Dr Khan started to develop the Green Digital Campus. The foundation of the dream project started silently. The implementation of the climate-friendly Green Digital Campus and tropical garden took momentum in land situated in Ashulia, Datta Para (Presently Names as Daffodil Smart City).

The main strength of DIU was Daffodil Computers Ltd and Daffodil Software Ltd. DIU first made an agreement with Daffodil Computers Ltd and in association with Daffodil Computers Ltd., DIU started its automation and digitization process using the latest technology because to develop a Tech-Savvy young generation, DIU needed to develop its infrastructures. Accordingly, DIU made its entire operation automated and it was possible because a big supporting unit called Daffodil Software Ltd. helped in the entire process.
DIU gradually developed the mindset of the people, developed the entire infrastructure, for example, brought the latest technology, IT services, initiated One Student, One Laptop project, Platform-Based Career Guidance Services, STEM Education, Largest Data Center, CCTV Control Room, Digital Library, ERP, Innovation Lab, Digital Classroom facilities, Robotics, AI-based Report Platforms, Platform based Academic Practices in its features. With these features, DIU has already brought a massive change in the traditional teaching and learning methodology and of course in people minds.

In 2012, when DIU initiated the Learning Feedback System, LFS in short. The first-ever platform-oriented teaching and learning technology in tertiary level education in Bangladesh. The entire solution made teaching and learning interactive, brought students and teachers closer, students started to share their learning experiences with the teacher, teachers also supported their learning needs.

DIU gives an effort to integrate updated technology in its systems. After doing impact analysis in LMS, DIU introduced Google Classroom features in 2014. The result was more promising at this stage. Teachers could easily track students’ performance and students also could keep pace in their learning. Students started to learn more easily and their class participation was improving too.

As part of its continuous research in improving teaching & learning technology, DIU took a major Transformative step and introduced its Blended Learning Center (BLC) platform in 2016. The innovation and integration brought a drastic change and the impact in the teaching & learning systems was very progressive. So, DIU paid more effort to develop the BLC platform, keeping eyes on the latest learning technology, systems and methodology. Since then, DIU took a lot of initiatives to develop the BLC platform features to completely move into platform-based teaching and learning along with institutional control and tracking.

Through the BLC platform, DIU was very much ready and equipped with its teachers and students to face this global crisis and bring sustainable success. The system was designed in a way that physical presence was not required to sustain the operations of the institution.

The start of this initiative was not so easy but it was possible because of the strong leadership effort of Dr. Md. Sabur Khan and the team.

**Why DIU Thought to Speed up the Digitization Effort?**

The recent pandemic situation has confronted us with impulsive disruptive conditions which left a major impact on our day to day lives, education, commerce and economy and dominating our political decisions as well. The first 100 days (Mid-March to mid of June 2020, when the Bangladesh Government declared countrywide lockdown) were truly challenging and we went through such a time where borders were declared closed, organizations had to shut down their regular activities and institutes remained closed for long. The entire world was facing a crisis. All this happened because we didn’t have preparedness and our systems were not developed in such a way so, many of the institutes suffered from the lack of digitization and automation.

Before the pandemic situation, we didn't realize the importance of renovation, automation, and digitization of Education systems. Also, during the COVID situation, the work pattern of
Human Resources changed so due to not having the required skills and knowledge many of the institutions and even industries had to shut down. The COVID 19 outbreak is now pointing us to accept the reformation which was the talk of the region for years. We are now at a stage to bring the change here. Daffodil International University took a bold decision to transform its entire academic and administrative operations and to develop its teaching and learning methodology.

However, higher education institutions are going to teach a tech-savvy Gen-Z and Alfa Generation who enjoy teaching with the following features:

- Lectures with Audio-Visual contents
- Performance-Based/Activity oriented Teaching Methods
- Learning by Doing Session/hands-on
- Communication on both sides.
- Demonstration by the teacher

Considering the above mentioned fact DIU took initiative of transformation then and is taking now also.

DIU Always Welcomes the Innovation:

The excellence in automation and digitization of Academic Operation of DIU didn't happen overnight. We already mentioned that it is the result of a futuristic vision of the University. If we see the entire campus of DIU we will find

- It’s a total Learning Zone
- Very well planned and resourceful
- Decorated to inspire learning by doing
- ICT supported Campus
- Lab Based Learning

The entire function and operation is governed by its own Smart edu solution. The Smartedu solution has been developed in such a way which ensures effortless Academic operation from a simple dashboard. From tracking class to tracking students attendance, teachers performance evaluation, resource allocation, accounts operation, students’ performance, task load of every individual, HR assessment, daily communication, identifying best teachers, daily task performance and tracking students’ performance, drop out students list, all are possible to track by this single platform.

Besides, DIU decorated the entire campus as a learning zone which is rare in Bangladesh. DIU has one of the Largest Library, e-library, Digital Class Monitoring panel, Innovation Lab, Annisul Huq Research Center, Marketing Lab, Green Garden for Teachers-Students meet up point, Engineering Lab, and all other lab facilities so that students can learn anywhere in the campus.

DIU initiated the country's first ever Innovation lab where students work on ideas. The lab has been included with market space, robotics zone, 3D printer, IOT-based electric bulb, fan, air
conditioning, architectural design, book reading zone, business incubator, meeting room, all in one TV with android and windowed facilities.

{Ref: https://www.thedailystar.net/city/news/innovation-lab-inaugurated-diu-1803898}

The Leader of Innovation

Dr. Md. Sabur Khan

Dr. Md. Sabur Khan is one of the recognized names in the Education and Tech Industry of Bangladesh and beyond. Dr. Khan gave a humble beginning in the ICT business & Education world and created the largest ICT and Education Empire of the country. As a serial entrepreneur, Dr. Md. Sabur Khan, Chairman of Daffodil International University (DIU) and Daffodil Education Network (DEN) started his business career in 1990 by an IT startup, naming Daffodil Computers Ltd. the 1st and one of the leading public-listed IT companies in Bangladesh. Later on, he started computer assembling, representing a key reputed brand like HP, Compaq, Microsoft, Intel, etc., introduced the first local brand pc daffodil Pc in 1998, established chain super shop in 1996, started Software development in 1998, and diversified a lot of areas gradually, and entered the education sector in 1997. Today Daffodil Family has 40 sister concerns serving in the IT, Education, Healthcare and Investment sectors of the country.

He has involved himself with a lot of challenges while he was the President of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI), the Bangladesh Computer Samity (BCS), and the Member of Prime Minister’s ICT Task Force of the country. The Bangladesh government has awarded Dr. Md. Sabur Khan, with the status of ‘Commercially Important Person’ (CIP) for his role.

His commitment has attached him as Visiting Professor with a lot of foreign universities. He has been awarded Honorary Professorship, Honorary Doctorate, and Honorary D. Litt from several foreign institutions. He has been conferred with Honorary Fellowship from Said Business School, Oxford University by ABRM for his contribution.

He has established more than Four Dozen of companies where 5000 plus people are working and more than 50000 students are studying in the educational network.

Dr. Md. Sabur Khan has been elected as the First Vice President of the Association of Universities of Asia and the Pacific (AUAP) for the year 2021-2022. According to the AUAP constitution, he will lead this international association as the 17th President in the year 2023-2024. Earlier, Dr. Md. Sabur Khan was elected as the Second Vice President of the Association of Universities of Asia and the Pacific (AUAP) in 2018 and he was highly appreciated for his effort.

World Business Angels Investment Forum (WBAF), the largest Angel investor’s forum designated him as the High-Commissioner of WBAF for Bangladesh. In 2020, the World Union of Small and Medium Enterprises (WUSME) nominated him as the Ambassador. Also, he was the Former Director and Chairman, Global Trade Committee in World Information Technology and Services Alliance (WITSA)

Dr. Khan initiated a challenging project to create 2000 new entrepreneurs, wrote & published several books in two languages, and initiated a business incubator, startup, venture capital, Department of Innovation and Entrepreneurship at the university level to promote
entrepreneurship. He has also introduced EDF (Entrepreneurship Development Fund) for the students.

He established the ‘Daffodil Foundation & Daffodil Institute of Social Sciences (DISS) for the well-being of underprivileged people.

He has led many local leading organizations and associations as well and kept his excellent leadership example too. Dr. Khan has achieved many awards nationally, and internationally. As recognition, he was awarded Nationally & Internationally many times. He got recognition from Honorable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the BCS Digital Expo in 2009 for his special contribution to the ICT industry. He got recognition from Honorable President Abdul Hamid Chowdhury, Late President Zillur Rahman, for his outstanding leadership and effort in different times. Dr. Md. Sabur Khan was known for his academic results too. He has attained his BSc (Hons) and MSc in Statistics from Jahangirnagar University. (1983-1987)

For more information, please visit: http://sabur.me/

About Blended Learning Center
(https://elearn.daffodilvarsity.edu.bd/)

Blended Learning Center is the digital teaching and learning hub of Daffodil International University. The platform aims to connect teachers and students effectively allowing teachers to track progress of individual students and better facilitate their learning.

Daffodil International University has well established itself as the pioneer digital university in Bangladesh. The university specializes in process automation and digital teaching and learning management. Almost all the processes and activities of the university are run by digital infrastructure, web applications and software. As the process of its digitalization Daffodil International University is developing BLC from 2013 and preparing students and teachers compatible to work with this. A strong BLC team is working for the continuous development and training of teachers and students. As a result, Daffodil International University (DIU) had successfully conducted online classes from the start of Covid-19 pandemic using BLC.

At the beginning of the transformation to fully online class, there were some challenges with the internet connection for the students located in remote locations of the country. However, Daffodil International University has overcome the problem within a very short time.

How the e-Education Effort Has Been Proven the Reality?

Since the Bangladesh Government and University Grants Commission is assessing the prospect of e-learning feature possibility in Bangladesh, Daffodil International University is continuously doing Research & Analytics in developing e-Learning platforms since 2013. Therefore, when the other education institution was really facing challenges and took the time to start its operation, DIU activities were operational from day one. DIU started with the Google Class Room features and has done a lot of research in Teaching & Learning practices, so it helped the teachers and students to cope up with the changing environment maintaining the quality. The teacher started
supporting the class from home with the smartphone. The system was designed in such a way that physical presence was not mandatory to keep the operation on.

The Honorable Chairman of the university directly followed up and started to track the Online activities utilizing the available tools like, Whatsapp, email and he designated the Computer Science & Engineering, and Software Department in association with Daffodil Software Ltd. to develop the Smart Education Solutions and started developing the Blended Learning Center which will be needed in the long run to make the Academic operation sustainable. Since Google Classroom has generalized features in it, DIU started to develop its own Platform named Blended Learning Center which DIU initiated in the year 2016. The total team started to work day and night to make this effort successful. The main reason for developing Blended Learning Center instead of Google Class Room is for the following reasons:

✔ BLC is easier to Use and have rich features which have been developed focusing on DIU needs
✔ Fast Student Tracking
✔ Education Resources are available for further study
✔ Track Students Performance
✔ Have AI-based Exams module to track Students during the exam time
✔ Students get all references for further study.

To make the entire effort successful, it was necessary to work on Teaching and Learning methodology:

DIU made the system very easy and user friendly so that any student and teacher can use it without any hassles. DIU has hosted the platform in the AWS cloud infrastructure to scale the platform to accommodate more than 20000 students and teachers. The system has already been proved effortless and effective. The system has been designed in such a way that students can easily access and enrol in the courses utilizing their DIU provided unique email addresses. The course details and credentials are provided by the teachers and coordination officers of each department to the students based on their registration.

After logging into the systems the students can edit their profiles. The Dashboard has been designed in a way that allows both the teachers and the students to access their courses with ease, and keep track of important updates and notifications from their enrolled courses. Courses are organized in topic-based sections so that students can easily browse important and useful materials like Course Objectives, Syllabus, Lesson Plans, Lesson materials and external resources. Each course also comes with lesson based activities and assessments like Assignments, Quizzes, Forum Discussions, Peer-reviewed workshops, polls, etc. The BLC platform offers 26 different activities that are inbuilt with the system. To further extend the possibilities the BLC platform offers integration with hundreds of other online applications and thousands of plugins. H5P interactive contents allow students to interact with the course materials and learn in a fun and engaging way.

In the BLC platform, Teachers can perform actions such as content and resource sharing in the form of documents, audio, videos, external links and embedded content; taking attendance directly from the BLC platform, post important updates using general announcements and notify the students through the platform and emails, taking live class, guide students through online discussion forums, messaging the students, tracking student progress, assess the students through quizzes and assignments, set interactive contents to engage students, view and edit
grade book to accumulate students’ result, view reports on course completion by students and their weekly interactions through report dashboard, etc.

The teacher gets the option to create a discussion forum. Through the forum, teachers can discuss the taught modules with the students, answer their quarries, and invite questions from students. Group Discussion is one of the key elements of learning. In the BLC platform students also help each other by participating in discussion/debate to solve any unsolved issues. If needed the teachers also participate and guide the discussion in a meaningful way.

Teachers have the option to create Assignments and ask students to submit their works and learning reflections in multiple file formats without any issues which creates flexibility for both the students and teachers. Teachers can also enable Turn tile plagiarism checker while creating assignments which checks for plagiarism in the students’ submissions and provide similarity reports to both teachers and students.

Students at DIU are not limited to only browsing course lessons and contents during this pandemic but also participating in major examinations like midterm and final examinations where the majority of other institutions are facing challenges to continue their academic operations. The BLC platform is also equipped with an online proctoring solution (soon to be powered by AI), which allows the central administration and academic departments to check and verify integrity by preventing students from adopting any kind of unfair means during the examination. The teacher can set various types of questions utilizing 16 different question types providing the convenience to create both MCQ and Essay questions.

The entire platform enables the students to access all the materials, whenever and wherever they need them. The entire solution keeps students motivated and engaged from the beginning to the end, and makes the learning process enjoyable. DIU has aligned its activities to help the nation to achieve the SDG by 2030. The University is also contributing to bring an end to extreme poverty, promote prosperity and well-being for the community, contribute to protecting the environment, address climate change, and encourage peace and security to ensure a self-sustained nation.

Today DIU is introduced as a digitally fluent institution to the entire world. DIU has already achieved a prestigious position in QS Ranking and UI GreenMetric Ranking competing with many prestigious Universities of the world. With the Vibrant Leadership of Dr Md. Sabur Khan, Founder and Chairman of DIU, the entire academic system has been developed integrating with modern technology and AI systems to ensure the best learning experiences for the students and present an employable future generation to the society.

Seven Pillar of BLC:

Here we are trying to present the Seven Pillars of DIU Activities.

The main reason why DIU shifted to Hybrid Education through BLC was that we wanted to make it more systematic, realistic rather than the other customized Education Platform like Google ClassRoom.
7 Pillars

In BLC we are practicing following 7 pillars model to ensure Hybrid Education to continuity all level education (Play group to post graduate)
BLC has seven pillars to ensure the required changes in the education systems.

The reason for which we transformed from the Google Classroom to the BLC platform is to transform it as per our Bangladesh context, to make it a more effective one.

Pillar 1

INTERACTIVE VIDEO CONFERENCING (LIVE ONLINE CLASS)

There are many online meeting platforms to conduct live classes. However, we have built our own to deliver online live classes.

Pillar 2

MANAGING COURSES THROUGH LMS

Through our LMS, we can ensure learning objectives and desired outcomes. We typically upload courses to the LMS, which makes them easily accessible for remote learners.

The second pillar is the LMS through which we can easily manage the Learning Outcomes.
Through the Online forum students can easily discuss their understanding of particular topics.

**ONLINE DISCUSSION FORUMS**

Group Discussion is one of the key elements of learning. In our BLC we try to create scope of self guided discussion forum where learners participate in discussion/debate to solve any unsolved issues. If needed they also invite teachers to participate.

**ONLINE EXERCISES AND INSTANT FEEDBACK**

In our hybrid Education model another very attractive part are online exercise and instant feedback system. Learners find exercise files by their practice the taught skills and teachers provide feedback based on their performances.
This is one of the best parts of our systems. Here students can take instant exercises and can get the feedback.

Note: The snapshot of different module.

FACE-TO-FACE ON CAMPUS

Hybrid means there will be many online learning and few physical presence. Also Teachers find that face-to-face time is best suited to group work and meaningful communication. So we have also scheduled some limited time for face to face on campus class beside regular online learning. In this time teachers provide Lectures (basically question-and-answer session) and brainstorming.
In our systems, we have both online and face to face sessions. Through this feature, students can learn better.

**BLENDED ASSESSMENT**

- Assignment
- Case Study
- Quiz
- Self Assessment
- On campus exam

There are several criteria for assessment. So easily it helps students learn.

**HYBRID EDUCATION THROUGH OUR BLC**

Helps to revive our education system despite many challenges
A simple statistic which was taken one year back to show its effectivity
Recently we have added Mentorship with these features. It means until a student gets a job, he remains under a mentor for ensuring his Employability.

How it is helping in Education Generation (During Pandemic Situation)

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected educational systems worldwide, leading to the near-total closures of schools, universities and colleges. Most governments around the world have temporarily closed educational institutions in an attempt to contain the spread of COVID-19. From the start of the coronavirus crisis all of the public and private educational institutions have faced difficulties in providing teaching in the physical classroom. So there is a rush to transform physical classrooms to online virtual platforms. Daffodil International University (DIU) started its journey on online teaching from 2013 and developed courses using one of the world’s best online teaching platforms with the banner of DIU Blended Learning Centre (BLC). As a result Daffodil International University got the highest benefit of its Blended Learning Center during the Corona Pandemic.

Daffodil International University (DIU) had successfully conducted online classes from March 26, 2020 after the outbreak of Covid-19 to smoothly run all activities of Spring 2020 and Summer 2020 by using its licensed Blended Learning Center (BLC) and G-Suite for Education.
During the COVID-19 pandemic, the university has successfully completed all academic and administrative activities online and served the majority of its students located in remote locations of the country. Presently the university could successfully accommodate over twenty nine thousand users including students, teachers and administrators, Over 4000 courses in the BLC platform with a strong cloud based infrastructure.

**Current Statistics of BLC Operation:**

- Total Number of Courses - 8787
- Active Students - 21600 (Based on the access on BLC platform in last one year)

**The First 100 Days Statistics of e-Education**

The statics which came out in the first 100 days of Pandemic Situation inspired many organizations-

- In the first 100 days of the lockdown, about 40,000 classes were completed online through the e-learning platform
- Attendance per class was 68% in average
- Around 15K Students took part online classes
- 50 Parents meeting was hold
- Quizzes, class tests, exams, assignments, completed online
- More than 200 webinars have been held with famous professionals from home and abroad
- All we have done with simple available tools
- 1,000 co-workers worked with each other for the last 100 days, but we met up with no one face to face.
- Google Meet, Google Classroom, Moodle
- We have initiated 3 major events where we got representation from 20 countries. And were blessed to integrate with 3 major ministries who supported us actively
- We have also developed 3 Learning portals to support the education institutions in Bangladesh for complementary use
- Blended Learning Center for Universities Educational Activities, College.ac for college and Polytechnic Education Activities, School.ac for School education activities```

How it is different from other e-edu platforms
Through the BLC platform teachers can organize varieties of activities like assignments, quiz, forum discussion, chat, Interactive content, survey, peer reviewed workshop, course wiki, glossary adaptive lessons, etc. What makes the BLC platform more powerful is its ability to integrate a lot of other learning tools offered by different third party services like Kahoot, Quizizz, Flipgrid, Padlet, etc. Teachers can also track the progress of each student through the platform and provide necessary feedback or counseling through the platform and this data can then be recorded and tracked through DIU’s counseling and mentoring platform. DIU is utilizing both synchronous & asynchronous mode of online learning with the help of its stable BLC platform for students with poor internet connectivity. The BLC platform is currently based on an intellectually designed cloud infrastructure suggested by both locally and internationally recognized experts which enables the students to learn regardless of their remote location or internet connectivity and makes learning interactive and lively.

Here are some special features of BLC:

- **Reading materials**: Reading materials could contain various lectures, reports, e-books and various other materials for the course. It also can be very useful in categorizing the course materials in various categories. Course categories help in creating a group of courses under an organizing heading. Courses can be grouped in a general way, for example, by creating categories like “Math” or “English” or “History.” or more detailed categories to organize related courses.

- **Papers and Projects**: Papers and Projects of the teacher or the various papers/projects submitted by earlier students to the institute (or teacher) can also be published and made available to the students undergoing the course. As these students are registered through the site they may be allowed to read and study these materials at their own benefit. Also this makes it a very good database for storing the projects and papers submitted to the institute or the teacher.

- **Discussion on the course concepts**: A chat window or a discussion section can be introduced to discuss the topic or course discussed on the BLC site. Where, both the teacher and the student can interact freely among themselves to create a discussion environment.

- **Forum relating to the course**: Just like a discussion section a forum can be created where frequently asked questions can be included to minimize the time consumption of the teacher and some students which can be saved from joining in the discussion of the FAQ topics.

- **Conduction of quizzes**: Evaluation of the students through tests and quizzes can also be included in the site through BLC and they come under the various activities provided by BLC. Various types of tests including essay questions, short answer questions, and multiple choice questions can be introduced on the site. For each type of test or quizzes the teacher has to use the various types of format given on the site for conducting these tests and quizzes.

- **Distribution, collection and evaluation of assignments**: Under different activities one of the activities that can be organized by the teachers is distribution of assignments to the students. This can be done by selecting activities and choosing assignments.
teacher can create an assignment of a course for the students. After that the students can access the assignment through the BLC site and then submit their assignment for the course. A student can submit his/her assignment as a file by uploading the file to the assignment submission or by HTML texting. These assignments can then be collected by the site to the database and these can then be assessed by the teacher through the site. The teacher can also provide grades for the assignment for each student which is stored in the database along with the assignment submitted by each student.

- **Keeping track of class attendance**: As BLC provides an online active participation of the course by the teacher, a class attendance can be kept for the students who have participated in the course. Since, each student has to log-in to the site and then through it attend the class, it can be easily used to keep track of the attendance of each student specifically.

- **Recording of grades**: Similar to keeping track of attendance of the students, the teacher can accumulate and keep track of the grades provided by him to each student through tests, quizzes and assignments by using the database of the BLC site. As the grade and attendance of each student is stored by the BLC site.

Some others effective features of the BLC are:

- Multi-Teachers Involvement in a Course
- Multi- Students Group/Section
- H5P-Interactive Contents
- Strong Automated Reporting System- (Competency breakdown, Course completion, Logs, Live logs, Activity report, Course participation, Activity completion, Students Progress Report etc.)
- Reward for Activity Completion (Badges, Points)
- Question bank
- Virtual Programming Lab
- Survey and Questionnaire
- Glossary
- WiKi etc

A dedicated team with specific expertise to facilitate these activities through the BLC platform along with some well-trained pool of talented teachers are continuously assisting all the teachers to continuously develop their online engagement.

**User Perspective. Before BLC and now. How it is changing the Mindset.**
At the beginning of the implementation of the Learning Management System (LMS) at DIU commonly known as BLC (Blended Learning Center) both the users, teachers & students came up with mixed kinds of mindset & perceptions. Some were very much excited and positive about the transformation but a few of them were not confident enough. Users’ feedback is as follows: We have asked

![Pie chart showing user feedback on BLC performance]

![Pie chart showing user feedback on BLC as a Learning Management System]
Challenges and How we have tackled those:

Since we were practicing the traditional Teaching and Learning techniques, we faced some challenges while we initiated e-Education. The main three challenges were the following:

- To break the tradition mindset of classroom culture
- Both the students and teachers highlighted the technical issues.
- To understand the psychology of students were challenging
- Resource Development
- Contentious Webinar
- Early Laptop Distribution and providing waiver to the Students
- Tutorials Development
- Training session program arrangement
- Pushing/encouring teachers and Students

Steps taken to Face the Challenges:

Daffodil International University, recognized as the country’s pioneer digital university, had earlier experience of conducting classes through online platforms during strikes and other calamities which helped the university to continue academic activities at this crisis moment.
Breaking the Traditional Mindset for Classroom Culture

During the start of the Pandemic situation, it was really difficult to bring everyone under the Blended Learning Center for education. Some of the students faced Technical tools problems, some were finding it difficult to get the lessons. The Internet was available to all, and the University initiated guidelines for supporting any problem, so the problem was solved easily.

Resource Development:

Daffodil international university working with online education before several years of the pandemic. For the easy BLC Implementation to the teachers and students DIU developed Strong BLC and HRDI Team.

Continuous webinar

The university also has the technology to conduct various learning webinars aiming to develop both teachers and students and through which students get the opportunity to have classes with world's renowned professors.

Early Laptop Distribution and providing waiver to the Students

For supporting the students to attend online classes, DIU ensured early distribution of 2500 Free Laptop for the students in this semester. Due to the Corona pandemic, Daffodil International University has decided to provide up to 50% tuition fee waiver for the newly admitted students in the Fall 2020 Semester. DIU provided Tk. 20 Crore as financial aid in summer 2020 semester and has taken initiative of providing scholarship of Tk. 20 crore in Fall 2020 semester.

Tutorials Development

One of the challenges was to develop the tutorial and here BLC encouraged the faculty staff to compete with available tools. The objective was to inspire the teacher to involve them and get prepared for the class. It has helped the Class be more effective.

Training session program arrangement-

While initiating the BLC courses DIU also needed to organize training sessions. So that they become experts in BLC uses and can work accordingly. As it is in the growing process so training arrangements are needed to add.

Motivating teachers and Students-

It was a challenge for our students and teachers to comply with
Why BLC should be awarded:

The BLC should be awarded for the following reasons:

- e-Education and e-learning is the demand of the time and BLC proved its effectiveness too.
- The pandemic situation has given us the realization that our education systems need to be reformed. Means We have no way to for e-Education
- The growing population of the country which demands e-Education
- Daffodil International University has not only contributed in its own e-Learning Platform during this Pandemic, the University has implemented it in Bangladesh University of Professionals too.
- 20,000 students are regularly attending classes which is rare in Bangladesh where institutions are finding it difficult to continue their classes
- Not a single class, test, examinations were missed
- Dedicated Technical Team is working to give every support to students.
- Necessary Plug inn has been added to ensure quality and variation
- Short video on courses has been added to track students' involvement in this task, duration of attendance, involvement with the video and can track who has attended the video and its duration too.
- Support Systems outstanding
- Innovation is always inspired in BLC and there is always scope for improvement.
- BLC is organizing Teachers training monthly twice
- Department Wise human resource has been specified to give support to Teachers & Students
- Additional Plug in feature to ensure actual performance of students in the exam and it really made the BLC more trustworthy.
- BLC can be a model for other institutions
- BLC has changed the mindset of teachers and Students and helped to continue our operation during the pandemic time.
- DIU has also automated the entire operation of the university.
- The mentors part of DIU is helping the students until they find jobs in the job market
- BLC would be the model for Industry 4.0 to set Future skills
- BLC developed the learning systems where teachers and students ensured preparedness for class. Means we can ensure the readiness for class
- BLC has the innovation, both synchronized and synchronized learning mode is possible here
- The quality of education can be monitored
- Made the students more interactive during class.

Most importantly DIU extended cooperation to other institutions for ensuring uninterrupted academic operation.
Some Visuals:

Image 1: Site Home Page of Blended Learning Center

Image 2: Course Interface of BLC
Resources for Reference:

BLC Site: https://sites.google.com/daffodilvarsity.edu.bd/diu-blc/guideline-for-diu-blc-moodle
HRDI Site-BLC Support: https://sites.google.com/hrdinstitute.org/hrdi/online-teaching-hub/blc-support?authuser=0
HRDI Youtube Channel: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCaKc58TzJMOSte08oNPgxPA

Webinar for BLC

- How to be a Better Online Teacher by Flower Darby
- Webinar for Students on Blended Learning Center
- Webinar: Teaching and Learning using Daffodil Blended Learning Center
- Impact of Covid-19 on the Future of Higher Education
- Webinar for Students on Blended Learning Center
- BLC and Online Teaching A Sharing Session

Some Courses in BLC:

System Analysis & Design (Summer 20)- https://elearn.daffodilvarsity.edu.bd/course/view.php?id=4567
Brand Management (Summer 20) Password: SM - https://elearn.daffodilvarsity.edu.bd/course/view.php?id=4520#section-0
Art of Living (Summer 20)- https://elearn.daffodilvarsity.edu.bd/course/view.php?id=5772

Standard Classes in BLC

Art of Coming Out of the Box by Ejaj Ur Rahaman - Art of Living . Daffodil
https://youtu.be/Oxv2JMP_bgg
https://youtu.be/NcJnsFHXF0
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1GQUPwNewp3kp-iA5m4cBCaWhlhMZP_hc/view
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1V3zzf7RFarWlvQllcCW09eYF_4QhyRyp/view
Other Tutorial

BLC Lesson Activity
BigBlueButton Setup
Taking Live Class using BigBlueButton
Finding Recorded Class in BigBlueButton

Press Release

News Link of BLC

The Daily Star

Tech World

Tech Alo News
https://www.techalonews.com/%e0%a6%a1%e0%a7%8d%e0%a6%af%e0%a6%be%e0%a6%ab%e0%a7%8b%e0%a6%a1%e0%a6%bf%e0%a6%b2-%e0%a6%87%e0%a6%89%e0%a6%a8%e0%a6%bf%e0%a6%ad%e0%a6%be%e0%a6%b0%e0%a7%8d%e0%a6%b8%e0%a6%bf%e0%a6%9f%e0%a6%bf%e0%a6%b%e0%a6%b0/

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NotunShomoy
Education Watch

http://www.educationwatch.net/2020/06/27/%e0%a6%ac%e0%a6%bf%e0%a6%8f%e0%a6%b2%e0%a6%b8%e0%a6%bf-%e0%a6%aa%e0%a7%8d%e0%a6%b2%e0%a7%8d%e0%a6%af%e0%a6%be%e0%a6%9f%e0%a6%ab%e0%a6%b0%e0%a7%8d%e0%a6%ae%e0%a7%87%e0%a6%b0-%e0%a6%ae%e0%a6%be%e0%a6%a7/

The Prominent

https://the-prominent.com/campus-notice-board-3540/?fbclid=IwAR2wFOe6cL-wOyfU2cnva_7TcHW-V-ehRI1pzGhfw-ZC4mnjD1xTX0hnT0Y

Jugantor

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BD Pratidin