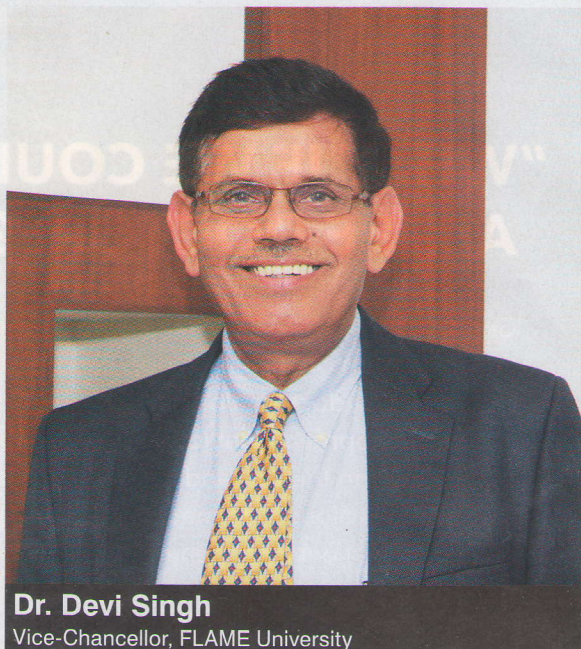


“OUR AIM IS NOT ONLY TO EQUIP STUDENTS FOR CAREERS IMMEDIATELY AFTER GRADUATION BUT ALSO PREPARE THEM WITH TRANSFERABLE SKILLSETS THAT LAST A LIFETIME. THROUGH THE INTERDISCIPLINARY EDUCATION FRAMEWORK, STUDENTS ARE ABLE TO IDENTIFY INTERSECTIONS BETWEEN DISCIPLINES AND CONNECT THE DOTS ACROSS SEEMINGLY DISPARATE AREAS,” Says **Dr. Devi Singh,**

The Vice-Chancellor Of Pune Based FLAME University. FLAME University Is A Philanthropic Effort, And Is Built On The Principles Of Liberal Education, With An Approach That Involves Holistic Development Of The Individual For A Leadership Role In The Society.



Dr. Devi Singh
Vice-Chancellor, FLAME University

Take us briefly through the journey of FLAME University. How and when did it come about?

FLAME University has been established as a state private university of the Government of Maharashtra. Earlier it was known as FLAME – Foundation for Liberal and Management Education.

FLAME University is the pioneer of liberal education in India. The University's main objective is to offer an inter-disciplinary platform of education that provides both breadth and depth in diverse areas of knowledge. The liberal education ethos at FLAME University inculcates leadership and risk-taking abilities in students and focuses on discovering one's passion. The student-centric learning is delivered by esteemed faculty scholars in a world-class campus setting.

What according to you are the key foundational elements of building a great academic institution?

Rigor, Research and Relevance. Academic institutions have a responsibility to deliver very rigorous programs and challenge

students intellectually. Only a rigorous program would make a lifelong impact on students. Universities also have responsibility to create new knowledge through research. This is critical in helping us understand the world around us. Finally, academic institutions have to be relevant to the society they operate in. They need to contribute to societal development on a continuous basis.

What have been the key milestones in its journey so far?

We have a world-class functional campus and have been able to attract exceptional faculty scholars across multiple disciplines who are educated at globally renowned universities/institutions. Our pedagogy, objectives and education innovations are unique in an Indian context.

Our postgraduate management program has been accredited by the National Board of Accreditation for a period of five years, a rare distinction granted to very few programs in the country. It has also consistently been graded by CRISIL with an A* rating

at the national level and A** rating at the state level which is an exceptional rating for a young program. Additionally, it has been accepted into the CFA University Recognition Program, which is recognition of the depth and rigor of its curriculum. These recognitions establish our program at par with the best in the country and enhance the quality of our educational endeavors at FLAME University.

Furthermore, we continue to work on several fronts. Our top priority is to continue to attract top-notch faculty from the best universities globally. We are also aggressively looking at international associations with FLAME University. We have strengthened all our academic processes to foster excellence at all levels.

Tell us a little about the various courses that aspirants can enroll for...

FLAME University currently offers undergraduate (B.A., B.Sc., BBA) & postgraduate (MBA, MBA [Communications Management]) programs across various disciplines through its four schools – FLAME School of Liberal Education, FLAME School of Business, FLAME School of Communication and FLAME School of Fine & Performing Arts. All FLAME University programs are anchored in the core ethos of liberal education.

FLAME School of Liberal Education currently offers intensive fully residential undergraduate programs in humanities, social sciences and physical and natural sciences. Led by our esteemed faculty, FLAME School of Liberal Education offers courses in disciplines like history, philosophy, art, mathematics, political science, religion, and other interdisciplinary areas. Majors offered include Economics, Psychology, Literary & Cultural Studies, International Studies, Environmental Studies, Public Policy and Applied Mathematics.

FLAME School of Business currently offers fully residential undergraduate and postgraduate programs. Majors offered include Finance, Marketing, Human Resources, Entrepreneurship and Operations.

FLAME School of Communication offers fully residential undergraduate and postgraduate programs tailored towards communication management. Majors offered include Advertising & Branding, Journalism, Digital Communication Management and Film & TV.

FLAME School of Fine & Performing Arts focuses on the teaching and promotion of classical, folk and contemporary performing arts, through an interdisciplinary approach. FLAME School of Fine & Performing Arts offers courses in dance, music, theatre.

Typically, when considering applications, what is it that you look for in students?

The goal of our admission process is to select best performing and well-rounded applicants who can contribute and enhance the learning experience at FLAME University. We have an internal assessment process which considers the following aspects of a student's application: ● Admission Test Scores. ● Group

Discussion ● Personal Interview ● Past Academic Record ● Work Experience (if applicable) ● Extracurricular activities/achievements ● Statement of Purpose (SOP).

We follow a sliding principle for selection, where we shortlist candidates based on their overall performance in all the parameters enlisted above. FLAME's selection process is designed to give each applicant a fair chance for admissions. Additionally, we also offer merit cum need based scholarships which includes partial to full tuition fee waivers.

FLAME University offers a range of degrees. With a large plethora of private universities in operation, what would you say is the USP of education at FLAME University?

As mentioned earlier, FLAME University is the pioneer of liberal education in India. At FLAME University, we provide an interdisciplinary platform for education - one that propagates different models and paradigms from various academic disciplines and also combines theory with practice. Our students thus explore many streams of knowledge before choosing their major. This platform enhances learning by imparting skills that complement the integration of knowledge necessary for students to apply their education in real world scenarios. Liberal education at FLAME University strives to deliver an academic experience that fosters intellectual curiosity, critical thinking, self-reflection, and leadership alongside teamwork, a sense of commitment and a heightened sensitivity to one's socio-cultural environment. Thus, the unique education attributes at FLAME University are the following:

- Unique major-minor combinations - The provision of flexible yet personalized study options at FLAME University places students at a unique advantage. Students can study their favourite subjects to explore and understand as well as simultaneously have a deep understanding of the subject that inspires them.
- Student-faculty ratio - FLAME University has one of the best student-faculty ratios of 10:1 available in the larger Indian as well as the international university system. At FLAME, we firmly believe that a fairly significant part of the student experience is predicated on access to faculty, e.g., opportunities for interaction, or feedback on academic work.
- Experiential learning experiences - The teaching-learning activities at FLAME University are geared to making the learners' experience meaningful, engaging and transferable to the circumstances, conditions and state of affairs in the real world.
- World-class infrastructure - The beautifully designed, high-tech campus has carefully crafted spaces for academics, recreation, collaboration and sport.
- Fully residential and stimulating campus life - FLAME campus is a fully residential community that nurtures a network of friends, with care and empathy. FLAME University provides umpteen opportunities for students to pursue their passions in areas other than academics.
- Industry interface - Ever year FLAME hosts many renowned national and international personalities who have distinguished



themselves in fields as diverse as education and entrepreneurship; scientific research and film making; and sports and social service. They share with students their experiences, and their professional and personal journeys which are veritable storehouses of information, inspiration and guidance.

For students wanting to consider an MBA from FLAME, what are 3-4 key things they can expect from your institution?

The MBA program at FLAME focuses both on the left and right brain of our students. Courses from social sciences, humanities, performing arts, foreign languages and sports (including golf) are mandatory part of the MBA program besides the core business curriculum and specializations.

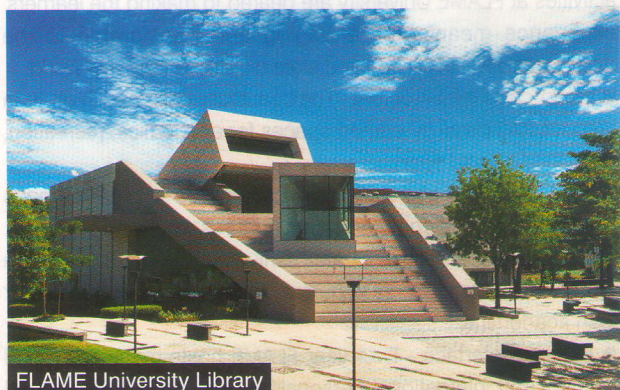
FLAME Investment Lab, FLAME Entrepreneurship Lab, Business Simulations, Enterprise Integration Systems, Thomson Reuters Terminals etc., provide various learning opportunities to students to gain close to real world experience.

FLAME University focuses on holistic development of its students giving them a broader outlook. Our endeavour is to develop leaders with social responsibility.

Our vision is to become an aspirational educational destination in the country for students and faculty members in the areas of liberal education and leadership. All the programs of FLAME University, including the MBA program are rooted in liberal ethos and provide a breadth of knowledge and ability to connect the dots with a deeper understanding in the chosen domain. Our focus over the next 12-24 months would be on continuous improvement of our curriculum and pedagogy which is very unique as compared to other MBA programs in the country.

There is a rising concern among students about employment after graduation. What steps do you take to increase their employability and leadership skills?

FLAME University strongly believes in educating its students for life with a focus on holistic development. Our graduates are doing well in their chosen careers. Many have joined the corporate sector while some of them have started their own businesses and are doing very well.



FLAME University Library

Besides this, we are continuously assessing our curriculum and program delivery to keep up with the rapidly changing business environment. Our strength continues to be our curriculum which provides both breadth and depth of knowledge.

Additionally, our aim is not only to equip students for careers immediately after graduation but also prepare them with transferable skillsets that last a lifetime. Through the interdisciplinary education framework, students are able to identify intersections between disciplines and connect the dots across seemingly disparate areas. Focus on developing fundamental skills like analytical reasoning, critical thinking, superior communication, perspective building and problem solving further augments professional expertise.

Do you have a placement cell on campus? How is FLAME University doing in terms of placements? What are some of the key placements that have happened?

FLAME University has an extremely active corporate relations team headed by very senior resources with extensive experience in placements and industry interaction. All postgraduate students are provided with assistance in final placements and internships.

Our placement record has been excellent. More than seventy companies participated in our placement process last year. On average our students had 5 interview opportunities. The compensation scales have been highly competitive. More importantly, some of our students have become entrepreneurs and job creators and are running unique enterprises.

Companies like HDFC Bank, Axis Bank, Kotak, ICICI, Vedanta, Café Coffee Day, Infosys, TCS, Deloitte Consulting, Reliance Mutual Fund, Dunia Finance, National Stock Exchange, JSW, Future Group, Asian Paints, ITC, Adani Enterprises, Star Entertainment Media, ITC, Leo Burnett, JWT, DDB Mudra, Group M, Vodafone, DNA India, Grey Advertising, L&K Saatchi & Saatchi, Zee TV, Reliance Jio, Zomato, UTV Bindass, Ogilvy & Mather, etc. have participated in our placement process.

Start-ups have come to be the order of the day. How much of your course is designed to encourage out of the box thinking?

I strongly believe that entrepreneurs can be nurtured. Creating a strong ecosystem is important. We hear about numerous start-ups coming up in the past few years in India. It is not that our nation's DNA has changed suddenly. It is only that the ecosystem is finally falling in place. Indians have started many companies in Silicon Valley for many years now and have been very successful. Even young people from middle class society with bright ideas need to be encouraged and supported.

It is the role of the educational institutes to provide know how in terms of identifying opportunities, building a business model around it, organizing funding, marketing in the initial years, understanding legal frame work etc.

At FLAME university, entrepreneurship is offered as a



specialization in both our undergraduate and postgraduate programs and is a very popular choice amongst students. We offer many courses in the entrepreneurship domain including creativity and innovation, identifying and evaluating opportunities, managing and growing new ventures, family business management, social entrepreneurship etc. that are designed to encourage out of the box thinking.

Other than academics, how do you ensure students develop a well-rounded personality? Are you encouraging of students taking part in Extra-Curricular activities?

FLAME University provides umpteen opportunities for students to pursue their passions in areas other than academics. There are more than 20 clubs on campus that help students engage in diverse interests and activities to enrich their social, cultural and educational experience at FLAME. Not only do these activities aim at rendering additional values, but also help students imbibe leadership qualities and creative skills.

Additionally, sports is a mandatory requirement and an audit course for all students which helps in building team work skills.

How do you keep the faculty at FLAME motivated and make sure they are abreast of all latest developments?

As higher education transforms globally, faculty who are at the epicentre of such transformation need to respond accordingly. Their role seems to have enlarged much beyond their traditional duties of teaching and research. Keeping this in mind, faculty members are regularly encouraged to attend faculty development programs and have access to many research databases that the university subscribes to including, EBSCO, JSTOR, Thomson Reuters, CMIE, CRISIL etc. Reputed speakers from various walks of society are invited to interact with faculty members and students. National and international conference participation is highly encouraged. Our state of the art library is the core that aids the faculty in keeping themselves abreast with all the latest developments.

Typically, what is the student-faculty ratio at FLAME?

Student-faculty ratio at FLAME University is a very healthy

10:1 which encourages close interaction between students and faculty members. FLAME University has one of the best student-faculty ratios available in the larger Indian as well as the international university system. At FLAME, we firmly believe that a fairly significant part of the student experience is predicated on access to faculty, e.g., opportunities for interaction, or feedback on academic work. Individual attention from professors makes the education experience more fruitful and fulfilling. The relatively higher faculty strength in relation to students results in more intense and immediate watch by the faculty so that students get correspondingly more value out of their higher education.

There is a lot of focus on research and innovation in today's times. How much of your courses are designed to address this?

Most courses at FLAME University have components designed to make students think creatively, and encourage them to research the subject in depth. For example, students in our communication programs have to complete a graduation research project which is guided by a faculty mentor. Many courses involve field research to understand the markets. Our finance students participate in the CFA investment research challenge conducted by the CFA Institute. Our undergraduate students take part in the Discover India Program which inculcates research methodology skills. Most of our programs are research-oriented in their focus. The emphasis is to enable students to develop a critical grasp over the disciplines and be in a position to generate original insights.

Moving forward, what is your vision for FLAME? What will you like to see it become in next 5 years?

The vision is that FLAME University should stand at par with some of the best known liberal arts schools of the west. We have created the required foundation. All we need is to move up the curve with added focus on research. Our vision is to become an aspirational destination for students and faculty members in the areas of liberal education and leadership. We will be the university of choice for higher education in India and Asia. FLAME will be amongst India's most reputed and respected universities. We will be recognized for the impact our research and teaching has on our students and the community at large. ■