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exam committee chairmen and departmental chairmen ask us to maintain a gap of minimum five days between full unit courses and three days between half unit courses. But in both cases, gap becomes for a week because we have to reschedule the date if the fifth/third day coincides with a Friday/hartal day.

Faulty question pattern

Most of the students interviewed cast doubt on the acceptability and utility of the prevailing question pattern in evaluating the quality of students. They were particularly critical about the traditional broad-questions.

Firstly, the broad questions are not helpful at all to develop the writing skill of the students because they, in writing answer to broad questions, do not depend on their own language rather they just reproduce the literature written in the note books/guide books.

Secondly, the traditional question pattern makes students reluctant to study the textbook thoroughly. This is because of excess availability of alternative questions in the question paper. For example, in the course final examination under Arts and Social Science faculties, a student has to answer questions out of eight. In most instances the questions are not divided into groups/sub-groups. Therefore, in most cases, students can get away with half portion of the course syllabus.

Thirdly, the traditional comprehensive questions provide much room for copying.

Excessive dependence on memory work

Without proper understanding of the tests, only memorisation is of no use because it bears no practical significance. Higher studies should not and

was very open and easy with my Khailas, but since they were older, these thoughts never entered my mind. Such education is a must for this generation.

rising power can do well in the examination. Though there is popular belief that students of Mathematics have nothing to memorise and they are to understand the subject matter, the fact is reversed in higher studies. Most of the teachers like bookish talks rather than creativity. If you write the answer in your own language you are likely to get less marks than you would do if you had followed the language of the text writer.

When this point was raised, a teacher of English department at Dhaka University said, "These days most of the students do not even touch the reference books rather they only get the guide books/photocopied hand notes prepared by any senior student and learn it by heart to pass the exam." They cannot show creativity/originality in their scripts because they do not have clear conception of the original topic of the syllabus.

Centrally held annual examination system

Examination is seasonal in our universities rather than regular. In the whole year, the students spend maximum two months in preparation for the course final examination comprising four/five papers. The course final examination covers 70% marks of the total course. In the whole year only three in-course/tutorial tests are taken in which students appear half-heartedly to manage easily obtainable 45% marks.

Centrally held annual examination suffers another grave problem. The examinations are taken on faculty basis. That's why if one department completes the course in time, it has to wait for the time when other departments with faltering steps will complete the course. Given the fact that the invigilation work is done, question paper is mainly set, exam-committee is manned and scripts are looked over by the departmental chairmen, the

opportunities to go abroad and settle there. At a later date, he did go abroad to study and researcher and earned reputation for himself and his *alma mater* in Dhaka.

Bangla department at Dhaka University who failed twice and got expelled twice in honours final examination ultimately stood first class first in masters examination. The daily Manab-jamin (of 21 October 1999) published a detailed story of how that person had manipulated in the masters final examination and ultimately got away with it.

Cut and dried syllabus

Unlike the competitive tests (say, for example, the university admission tests or the Civil Service Examination) the university examinations are based on cut and dried syllabus which is hardly adequate for the students to keep pace with the competitive world. Again, showing the lame excuse of time constraint the syllabus is shortened. In the Arts Building, only two classes are taken in a week on one single paper. For instance, in International Relations department, one student has to attend a total of eight classes in a week at masters level. According to controller of Examination Mr. Habibur Rahman, "The syllabus should be more comprehensive than the present one and at least four classes should be taken on one subject (paper) in a week".

Regarding cut and dried syllabus and questions, professor Ajoy Roy of Physics department, in a round-table discussion on "Dhaka University at the threshold of 21st century" organised by the Daily Bhorer Kagoz said, "We have to follow sub-standard syllabus and set sub-standard question because we teach sub-standard students. We receive poorer caliber students than we did three decades ago. How can I communicate with students of physics who are equally poor in English, Bengali and Mathematics, the three major languages of physics?"

Leakage of question

costs in the long run." The college had a rich library. The variety of books available was remarkable. Besides, Muzaffer had a collection of his own to boast

"Honesty is the best caretaker. If someone's conscience does not strike his mind nobody can make him honest. Incident like question paper leakage is a big shame for the university as well as for the nation".

Scope of copying in preparing term paper

Students are asked to prepare term paper on certain issues directly linked to the course. There are, no doubt, some good intentions behind these assignments. These are:

- i) to develop the writing skill of the student.
- ii) to provide scope for practical knowledge.
- iii) to develop students perspective, vision and creativity on the subject matter.

But all those purposes will be nipped in the bud if the students prepare the assignment by copying from book or WebPages verbatim. This is what exactly happens in most cases of assignments.

Inter departmental faculty discrepancies

A few students raised the problem of interdepartmental discrepancies on examination under the same faculty. In some departments, two in-course tests are taken for 30 marks while in some departments under the same faculty three tests are taken. In some departments, in course tests are taken for one hour while in another department, under the same faculty, in-course tests are taken for three hours. In some departments, examined scripts are shown before the students to make them aware of their faults while some departments do not publish results of in-course tests and students know the marks of these tests only after receiving the original mark sheet.

Apart from identifying the problems with examination, the DU students came up with some remedies as well which

He remembers a time in Noakhali when river erosion caused loss of many homes. As innumerable houses were falling apart he witnessed how other people of

amination must end by September and the result must come to light by January. Otherwise if the college session is from July to June, then the school session must be from July to June rather than January to December.

2. The question paper should be more demanding than the present one. It should seek student's analytical power and creativity rather than power to memorise. More and more short questions should be set replacing the traditional comprehensive questions. Students own language should be encouraged and memorised answers should be discouraged.

3. Repetition of questions in the same form over the year should be stopped. Question pattern should be changed every year.

4. The syllabus should be freed from confinement. It should be more comprehensive and open. Present syllabi are greatly theoretical and detached from life. The syllabus must contain a vision so that students can take help from it in constructing their lives. This is what real examination / education is about.

5. Open book examination system may be introduced to remove copying from examination. Students will have to think more on the subject matter to develop their own perspective and vision if the printed words of books carry less marks.

6. Number of tutorial classes should be increased. Students should be informed of the faults committed in one test before they sit for the next test.

7. The so-called course final examination should be abolished. Semester system should be introduced immediately in all faculties of the university.

8. To keep pace with the developed world, grading system should be introduced replacing the age-old marks system.

9. The University authority should provide more funds for

specimen, I feel that instead of dismissing me right away, he should have asked me to perform at rehearsals and then allow me to see for myself that my voice did not

other words, the next calendar should be an academic calendar in true sense.

11. The proposed academic calendar should not and must not be violated. That is classes must resume, course must be completed, examination must be held and results must be published on the day mentioned on the calendar.

12. The university authority has shown sagacity by keeping the university open on Saturdays, otherwise a government holiday. But ironically, the university observes about three months (90 days) of shut down in the name of academic holidays which is extremely expensive to students. To make the students hard working and more studious, the number of holidays should be reduced by half. This will help teachers and students complete course and appear in examination in time.

13. If the examination days coincide with any natural/artificial (?) calamities (like flood, bolt or hartal) the examination should be taken on the following public holiday. It should be turned into a law so that no instant notice is required. Helpless students must sacrifice the comfort of holidays because our "selfless" politicians do not know how to sacrifice for the sake of nation and its poor people.

The concluding line of this write up may be drawn from an editorial written by a famous journalist of the country who got frustrated when BUET students successfully demanded that classes be suspended so that they could fully enjoy the world cup soccer tournament which in no way coincided with class timings! First few lines of the editorial *All world cup and no study reads* "What fun it is to be a university student in Bangladesh! In other countries it is an onerous state to be in — one has to attend classes, listen to lectures, take copious notes, pursue volume after volume,

and he partly believed that he would get the role. However, instead of him, his brother was selected. The Assistant Head Master had